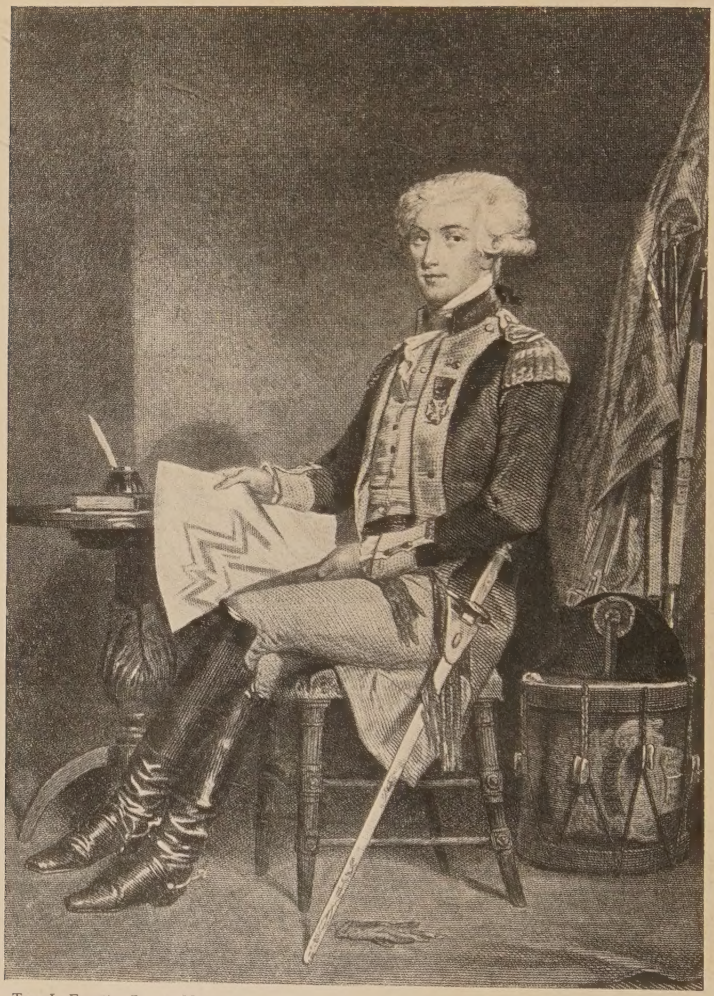
Mitchell College Library
New London, Conn.



True LaFayette, George Morgan

LAFAYETTE AS HE APPEARED AT YORKTOWN
From a drawing by Alonzo Chappel

# OUR DEBT TO FRANCE

"We have been contemporaries and fellow-workers in the cause of liberty, and we have lived together as brothers should do in harmonious friendship."

*Quotation from letter of Washington to Rochambeau, February 1, 1784*

The Washington Lafayette Institution

PUBLISHED BY
THE WASHINGTON LAFAYETTE INSTITUTION
17 BATTERY PLACE
NEW YORK CITY
1926

Printed in the United States of America

973.324
W27
Mitchell College Library
New London, Conn.

# PREFACE

FRANCE—Courageous, indomitable, chivalrous! The ever-living France! What is our debt to her? This question is answered ably in the following pages. In what measure is France indebted to the United States? That also is discussed.

The being of the United States as a free and independent nation is due largely to the men and substance sent by France, in the darkest hour of our struggle for liberty. This is beyond cavil. France sent her Lafayette, de Rochambeau, de Grasse; they came with her armies, her ships, and money. Without them there could have been no Yorktown.

What did France demand of the young republic in return for her participation? That also is answered in this book.

From 1914 to 1917, heroic France, tenaciously fighting against seemingly overwhelming odds, draining herself of her blood and wealth to save not only herself but the civilized world from an odious and intolerable autocracy, looked hopefully

to the United States for the assistance we were slow to recognize as an obligation.

During the first three years we sent munitions, materials, machinery, food; sacrifices we made, but on the whole we profited fabulously in wealth and prosperity through these exportations.

After three years we sent our armies and our navy, but our losses in men, though frightful, were negligible in comparison with those of France who saw one million seven hundred thousand of her sons killed.

What do we now demand of France? It is almost unbelievable that in the United States there are men—some of them in high places—who demand the pound of flesh from our prostrated friend. We find some comfort in the firm belief that the utterances of these men do not represent the opinion of our people.

The fact that France appears to be recovering from the mighty blow it has sustained is not to be mistaken for prosperity as prosperity is understood here. It is her indomitable, courageous spirit rising again—as it has risen before, again and again—passing through depression, the horrors of revolution, the payment of heavy indemnities, through

confusion and debt, fighting and working her way upward through a maze of complexities and burdens that well might have conquered the spirit of a less gifted nation.

France is proud. She does not ask for cancellation of her so-called debt of money, but she does ask—and rightfully so—that the terms of repayment be softened that she may meet them without impairing her integrity and without oppressing unduly her unborn sons of the future generations.

That the United States, recognized as the most beneficent nation of the world, should so far forget its early debt to France as to consider collection of the present financial obligation, if such it may be deemed, seems incredible.

The bond of friendship that existed between Washington and Lafayette, their mutual interest and life service in the cause of liberty, stand as an everlasting monument to the close brotherhood of the people of the two nations.

For the sake of our unborn sons, for our sake when judgment of us will be formulated by them, let us hope that we will dispose of the present vexing problem in a manner that will neither mar nor

weaken the glorious edifice left in our keeping by our forefathers.

"Am I my brother's keeper?" is a question that has been answered by a divinity overshadowing all earthly greatness.

W. LANIER WASHINGTON,

Hereditary Representative of George Washington in the Society of the Cincinnati.

## STATEMENT OF MATTHEW WOLL, VICE-PRESIDENT, AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR, ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE FEDERATION, NOVEMBER 9, 1925

"NOTHING could be more damaging to world prosperity than that huge and crushing payments should be pressed out of the less prosperous and most heavily taxed of the nations by the most prosperous. Ultimately America would lose as much as any country by the economic oppression of the nations of the European continent.

"The first consideration is that there should be some settlement, that an end be made of a condition that makes for international disorder and ill-will. Nothing could so delay and obstruct any conceivable settlement as the propaganda of enmity led by Senator Borah and his kind. Every word that he utters on this subject tends to convince the peoples of Europe that he and those he represents are willing to have them as economic enemies, and would rejoice to have them as economic serfs.

"The Senator wants us to forget that we offered these loans as a temporary substitute, in view of our unreadiness to send over our quota of men when

we first entered the war, that we deliberately offered our dollars as substitutes for lives, and that the leaders of both sides of Congress on the floors of the House and Senate expressed America's willingness to turn these loans into gifts if need be. Surely the hundreds of thousands of American lives so saved may count for a partial repayment and a justification for a partial cancellation of the debt."

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT

GRATEFUL acknowledgment is made by the Editors to Dr. James H. Penniman, Professor John H. Latané, Professor Louis G. Karpinski, and Charles Bache, Esq., for permission to use their articles in this book; and to Mrs. Rogers for permission to use the speech of her husband, the late Hon. John Jacob Rogers.

They also wish to express their gratitude to W. Lanier Washington, Esq., for his kindness in writing a preface for the book, and to Hon. A. Piatt Andrew for the permission to print his remarkable speech.

# CONTENTS

PAGE

OUR REVOLUTIONARY DEBT TO FRANCE. 1
By Prof. John H. Latané.

WHAT ELSE COULD FRANCE HAVE DONE? 24
Remarks of Hon. John Jacob Rogers.

HOW FRANCE AIDED AMERICAN LIBERTY 41
By Prof. Louis C. Karpinski and Charles Bache.

OUR DEBT TO FRANCE ..... 52
By James Hosmer Penniman, Litt. D.

WHAT LAFAYETTE DID FOR AMERICA.... 108
By James Hosmer Penniman, Litt. D.

FRANCE AND AMERICA TO-DAY ..... 131
By Congressman A. Piatt Andrew.

OUR PREARMISTICE LOANS..... 138
By Congressman A. Piatt Andrew.

## SENATOR BORAH'S REPLY

The address here printed was reported at some length in the Baltimore *Sun* of May 2, 1925. The following reply from Senator Borah appeared in the *Sun,* May 3rd:

> " I care only to say that I am not muddled and I am not so prejudiced that I cannot read history. I stated that all of the money loaned to this Government by France during the revolutionary period was repaid. In making that statement I did not discuss the question of certain gifts to this country. I insisted and still insist that all the money loaned to us by France was repaid, and at a high rate of interest, too. It is the gentleman at the head of the history department of Johns Hopkins University who is muddled, not myself."

# OUR DEBT TO FRANCE

## OUR REVOLUTIONARY DEBT TO FRANCE

By John H. Latané

Professor of American History in The Johns Hopkins University

In the political literature of the past ten years there are many references to our Revolutionary debt to France, some accurate as far as they go, others wholly false or misleading. For general inaccuracy and specific misstatement of facts I am compelled, after a careful examination of the subject, to assign first place to the present chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. In a speech on the French war debt reported in the Congressional Record of January 22, 1925, Senator Borah, who discusses public questions in quite the Websterian manner on a supposedly high plane of accuracy and political detachment, made certain statements in regard to the financial assistance rendered by France during the Revolutionary War, to

which Senator Bruce took exception, and the following colloquy occurred:

MR. BRUCE. The Senator is aware, of course, that France made some very large gifts to the people of the United States during the War of the Revolution?

MR. BORAH. I have not been able to find a record of them.

MR. BRUCE. The Senator will find a record of them among the letters of Benjamin Franklin. In one of his famous letters he acknowledged the fact that France made these gifts and expressed the hope that the gratitude of the United States because of them would be eternal.

MR. BORAH. Mr. Franklin, with whose history the Senator from Maryland is so familiar and concerning whom he has written so illuminatingly, was referring, I presume, to what was called the gift by Beaumarchais, but that was afterwards settled, after Mr. Franklin had passed to the region from whose bourne no traveler returns.

MR. BRUCE. If the Senator will allow me, I was not referring to that at all.

MR. BORAH. To what was the Senator referring?

MR. BRUCE. I was not referring to any part of the loans made by the French Government to the United States through the agency of the house of Hortalez and Company, of which Beaumarchais was the directing genius.

MR. BORAH. Will the Senator state to what specific gift he has reference?

MR. BRUCE. Franklin records the fact that on one occasion he applied to the French minister for a loan of 6,000,000 livres, only to be told by the French minister that the French Government was not willing to make a loan of that amount, but was willing to make a gift of that amount, which was duly made.

MR. BORAH. That took place, as the Senator must know, because at the time Franklin applied for that loan the French Government was not willing to risk its chances with the American Colonies, and they never did take the risk until after the Battle of Saratoga. Therefore they transmitted this loan—this gift, if the Senator prefers to call it such, which afterwards transformed itself into a loan—through certain individuals from whom Franklin got it. One of them was Beaumarchais. But that afterwards came in and was adjusted and settled, just the same as the other obligations were settled. If there was any gift of which there has been no settlement, after the most industrious effort I have been unable to find a record of it, and the Treasury Department has been unable to find any record of it, and in my opinion history does not record it.

It would be a waste of time to undertake a full analysis of this statement of errors before a group of history teachers, and in fact it would deserve no comment at all were it not for the fact that it was made by the Chairman of the Senate Com-

mittee on Foreign Relations. The Senator is hopelessly muddled. He has evidently confused the gift of 6,000,000 livres in 1781, for which France never expected or asked repayment, with the loan of 6,000,000 in 1783, which was repaid in full.

I respectfully call the attention of the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate to the contracts for the repayment of the French loans signed by Franklin and Vergennes in 1782 and 1783, and published in a work with which the Senate Committee should be fairly familiar, the official collection of the Treaties of the United States (compiled by W. M. Malloy), Vol. I, pp. 483 to 487. These contracts or treaties were duly ratified by the Continental Congress. In Article II of the treaty of 1783 we find the statement that "it has been found proper to recapitulate here the amount of the preceding aids granted by the King to the United States, and to distinguish them according to their different classes." The first two classes embrace the loans which are described with sufficient clearness. The treaty continues: "In the third class are comprehended the aids and subsidies furnished to the Congress of the United States, under the title of gratuitous assistance, from the pure generosity of

the King, three millions of which were granted before the treaty of February, 1778, and six millions in 1781; which aids and subsidies amount in the whole to nine million livres tournois. His Majesty here confirms, in case of need, the gratuitous gift to the Congress of the said thirteen United States."

A dispute later arose as to the first million advanced June 10, 1776, through Beaumarchais, before Franklin reached Paris. This was the so-called "lost million," which continued to be a subject of dispute for the next half century and about which I shall say more later. Deducting this, for the moment, from the 9,000,000 livres as fixed by the treaty, there remain 8,000,000 about which there has never been any dispute or question raised by either government. These 8,000,000 livres were a free gift for which repayment was never asked or offered. I challenge Senator Borah to produce any evidence from the records of either the State Department or the Treasury Department substantiating his statement that six millions of these advances were later transformed into a loan and fully repaid. In fact the very documents he quotes contradict him. In a memorandum from the Treasury Department published

as an appendix to his speech we find this statement: "So far as the Treasury has been able to determine the facts, there was never any misunderstanding over the gratuities granted by the French King to the United States through Benjamin Franklin, in amount 8,000,000 livres. The adjustment of 1795 seems conclusive in this respect." Senator Borah was not sufficiently familiar with the documents to understand the reference to "the adjustment of 1795." He evidently thought it referred to the gifts, whereas, as a matter of fact, it refers to the loans, as anyone who takes the trouble to examine the documents with any care will see.

Admitting, however, that the above reference to the adjustment of 1795 might mislead one not familiar with that settlement, Senator Borah stands convicted of carelessness on another count. He quotes at length from Bayley's "History of the National Loans of the United States." Now Bayley, without documentary evidence but relying solely on a passage in Loménie's "Beaumarchais and His Times," places the amount of the French subsidy at 10,000,000 livres instead of 9,000,000, and adds: "As this money was a free gift it has not been repaid, unless the sums paid Beaumarchais be taken as a partial reimbursement." Senator

Borah eagerly accepts the alternative. Bayley says that under an act of Congress of April 18, 1806, $78,886.26 was paid to Beaumarchais' heirs. In his speech Senator Borah, familiar with present-day national debts that run into billions, raises Bayley's figures from petty thousands to respectable millions and gives $78,886,026 as the amount paid in 1806 to the heirs of Beaumarchais. If we repaid that amount, more than our entire Revolutionary debt, domestic as well as foreign, then Senator Borah has some ground for thinking that our pecuniary obligations to France were fully liquidated.

The speech was not without its amusing incident. When Senator Bruce, who has written a two-volume work on Benjamin Franklin and is entitled to recognition as an authority on our relations with France during the Revolution, tried again to correct the unfounded assertions of the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, the latter objected to the interruption and refused to yield the floor, exclaiming: "I do not want the Senator to put incorrect history into my speech." [Laughter.] At the expense of Senator Bruce apparently! The speech as a whole might well move this gathering of history teachers to laughter, were it not for the appalling fact that it was uttered

by the Chairman of the Committee which has undertaken to wrest from the President of the United States the control of the foreign relations of the country.

We shall now consider the French loans, about which there has been no serious misunderstanding, except with reference to the first which was obtained by Franklin and Deane in 1777 from the Farmers-General of France, an organization which collected the taxes and enjoyed among other privileges the tobacco monopoly. In the contract for this loan dated March 24, 1777, Franklin and Deane undertook in the name of their government to deliver during the year 1777 five thousand hogsheads of York and James River tobacco, while the Farmers-General agreed, on their part, to accept bills drawn on them by Franklin and Deane in the course of the ensuing month to the extent of 1,000,000 livres, and to pay another million as soon as the tobacco arrived.[1] As Congress was able to deliver but a small part of the tobacco promised, only the first million was advanced under this contract, and a considerable sum remained due to the Farmers-General for the first million. This sum

[1] Wharton, "Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution," Vol. II, p. 300.

was later repaid to the French Government which as a result of the Revolution succeeded to the rights of the Farmers-General.

The first loan negotiated directly with the French Government was that of 1778 for 18,000,000 livres, advanced in twenty-one instalments from 1778 to 1782. This was the result of France's decision to recognize the independence of the United States, and the first advance was made three weeks after the signing of the Treaty of Alliance.

In 1781 France secured for the United States a loan of 10,000,000 livres from Holland, the interest and principal of which were guaranteed by the French Government. This must not be confused with the Dutch loan secured later by John Adams.

In 1783 France made another loan of 6,000,000 livres.

These loans amounted in all to 35,000,000 livres, or $6,352,500. In the contract between Franklin and Vergennes signed in 1782 the French Government remitted the arrears of interest on the 18,000,000 loan, amounting, Franklin stated in his letter to Congress, "to the value of near two millions" (livres).[2]

[2] Malloy, "Treaties of the United States," Vol. I, p. 485, and Bigelow, "Works of Benjamin Franklin," Vol. VIII, p. 145.

After the Revolution the finances of the Confederation were in such bad shape that Congress was unable to keep up the interest payments on the French loans or to pay any instalments on the principal, but after the organization of the new government under the Constitution Hamilton took the matter in hand, and both principal and interest, with the exception of the remitted interest referred to by Franklin, were eventually repaid in full. The final funding operation took place in 1795 when the debt was converted into domestic stock, bearing interest at 4½ and 5½ per cent per annum. In a report dated December 14, 1795, Oliver Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury, stated that the French debt had been "adjusted to the satisfaction of an authorized agent of the French Republic." The 4½ per cent stock was all repaid in 1807 and 1808, and the 5½ per cent stock was finally paid in 1815.[3]

Having disposed of the loans, we revert now to Beaumarchais and his services to the American cause. As the result of information received by Franklin from friends in Paris that France was inclined to render secret aid to the colonies, Congress decided to send an authorized business agent

[3] American State Papers, Finance, Vol. I, pp. 360, 671.

to Paris, and in February, 1776, Silas Deane, of Connecticut, who had been a member of the first and second Congresses, was elected to fill this important post. He was directed to proceed to Paris in the character of a West Indian merchant, and was furnished with letters of introduction to various friends of America. He reached Paris in July, and soon established close relations with Caron de Beaumarchais, a secret agent of the French Court. Beaumarchais, famous in literature as the author of two of the most popular comedies of the day, the "Barber of Seville," and "The Marriage of Figaro," was something more than an adventurer, a man, undoubtedly, of great talents, and while a past-master in the art of intrigue, there was a fascinating combination of boldness, resourcefulness and chivalry in his nature. Long before the arrival of Deane he had conceived the idea of becoming the secret agent of the French Court in forwarding supplies to the colonies, and had made journeys to London to confer with Arthur Lee, of Virginia.

Before the arrival of Deane, the Count de Vergennes, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had secured the assent of the King to two propositions, first, furnishing a million livres to the colonies, and sec-

ond, the appointment of Beaumarchais as the secret agent through whom aid was to be extended. Beaumarchais is generally credited with having enlisted Vergennes in the cause and with having finally won the approval of the King. In a memorial to Louis XVI in February, 1776, Beaumarchais said: "If it be replied that we can not assist the Americans without offending England and without drawing upon us the storm which I wish to keep off, I reply that this danger will not be incurred if the plan I have so many times proposed be followed—that of secretly assisting the Americans without compromising ourselves. . . . If your majesty has not at hand a more clever man to employ in the matter, I undertake and answer for its execution without anyone being compromised, persuaded that my zeal will supply my want of talent better than the talent of another man could replace my zeal."

In pursuance of his scheme, Beaumarchais established a mercantile house under the fictitious name of "Roderique Hortalez et Cie." When Deane arrived he was semi-officially referred to this firm, from which he soon obtained clothing for 20,000 men, 30,000 muskets, 100 tons of gunpowder, 200 brass cannon, 24 mortars, with shot

and shell in proportion. The firm of Hortalez and Company continued in existence from 1776 to 1783, occupying a large residence on a prominent street formerly owned by the Netherlands Government as its embassy. During that period its disbursements are said to have amounted to over 21,000,000 livres, a considerable portion of which was used in the purchase and shipment of military supplies to America. Beaumarchais' letters are delightfully written and highly entertaining, and there can be no question about his zeal for the American cause or the value of the services which he actually rendered.

As a natural consequence of the dubious and fictitious character of the house of Hortalez and Company, the question arose, when the time came for settlement, as to whether certain supplies received by Congress from Beaumarchais were sent on his own account or were gifts from the French Government. Arthur Lee, who had conceived a violent dislike of Beaumarchais, insisted that they were gifts, for which no payment was expected. This view appears to have been shared at first by Franklin and Deane, but when they made inquiry of Vergennes, he replied that the King had furnished nothing; that he had simply permitted

Beaumarchais to provide himself from his arsenals, on condition of replacing the articles.

In 1786, when the accounts of M. Grand, the American banker in Paris, came up for settlement, it was discovered that he had credited the United States with only two million livres received as a gift from the French Government prior to the treaty of 1778, whereas in the contract of February, 1783, between Franklin and Vergennes, the amount was put at three million. Franklin, who had returned to the United States, was unable to explain the discrepancy, and wrote to Grand earnestly requesting him " to get this matter explained, that it may stand clear before I die, lest some enemy should afterwards accuse me of having received a million not accounted for." The only information Grand could get from Vergennes was that the million in question had been advanced June 10, 1776. As this was before the arrival of Franklin, or even Deane, at Paris, Franklin concluded that the million had been paid to Beaumarchais and that it was a *mystère du cabinet,* which perhaps had better not be further inquired into.[4]

Thus the " lost million " entered the case, and

[4] Wharton, " Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution," Vol. I, pp. 376–380.

Congress refused to pay Beaumarchais' claims until the mystery could be cleared up. When Hamilton was Secretary of the Treasury, Beaumarchais' claim was again taken up, and the auditor reported a balance due Beaumarchais of 2,280,231 livres, but again raised the question of the "lost million." At the request of Hamilton, Jefferson directed Gouverneur Morris, United States Minister at Paris, to make further inquiries of the French Government. Now that the monarchy had been overthrown, the government of the Republic had no objection to revealing the state secrets of the old régime, and Morris was given a copy of the long sought receipt, which showed that the million in question had been received by Beaumarchais, and that he had agreed to account for it to Vergennes.

After Beaumarchais' death in 1799, the claim was taken up by the French Government on behalf of his wife and daughter, and in 1806 Congress passed an act authorizing the payment of $78,886.26, the amount reported by the Treasury officials as due after the deduction of one million livres. Beaumarchais' heirs continued to press for the payment of this million.

The French Government repeatedly declared

that the million in dispute had been used for secret political purposes in advancing the American cause, and produced papers with the endorsement of Vergennes and the King to the effect that the money had been used for the purposes designated. The opponents of the claim expressed the belief that the money was used for the purchase of supplies intended as free gifts from the King of France. The payment of the claim was recommended by Attorney-General C. A. Rodney, by Attorney-General William Pinkney, by Presidents Madison and Monroe and by various committees of Congress, but no action was taken.

In 1828 the claim was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, of which Edward Everett was chairman. The report, dated April 1, includes all previous reports and most of the important documents bearing on the case.[5] The committee recommended payment of the claim and reported a bill for that purpose. This recommendation shared the fate of the preceding ones.

In 1831 Mr. William C. Rives, United States Minister to France, signed a convention adjusting claims of American citizens against France for the illegal seizure of ships and goods during the

[5] 20th Cong., 1st Sess., House Report No. 220.

Napoleonic wars and the claims of French subjects against the United States. The convention embodied a compromise on both sides. American claims were reduced to 25,000,000 francs and French claims to 1,500,000. Out of the latter sum the Beaumarchais' heirs, whose claim now amounted with interest to 4,689,241 francs, received in 1835 the sum of 810,000 francs.[6] The dispute was thus officially ended.

Senator Borah, quoting Bayley, says this sum of 810,000 francs, together with the amount paid in 1806, made an over-payment of 1,426,787 livres. Bayley was an official of the Treasury Department, who prepared for the Census Report of 1880 a history of the National Loans of the United States.[7] Now let us see how he arrives at the over-payment. He reaches his conclusion by deducting not only the million advanced June 10, 1776, but a million advanced by Spain, August 11, 1776, and a third million which he says was advanced by France in instalments during the year 1777. He finds the third million in a statement which occurs in Loménie, "Beaumarchais and His Times." Nowhere else have I been able to find it. It is cer-

[6] Moore, "International Arbitrations," V. 4460.
[7] Tenth Census Reports, Vol. VII, pp. 299–486.

tain that it was unknown to the American diplomats, Treasury officials, and committees of Congress that passed on the claim. Bayley's statement of the account (p. 303) is as follows:

| The United States | Livres |
|---|---|
| By shipments of produce ..... | 713,996 |
| By payment to M. de Francy ..... | 55,000 |
| By bills of exchange on Franklin .... | 2,688,000 |
| By French subsidies paid Beaumarchais. | 2,000,000 |
| By Spanish subsidies paid Beaumarchais. | 1,000,000 |
| By grant by Congress April, 1806 .... | 434,635 |
| By payment in 1835 ..... | 810,000 |
| | 7,701,631 |
| To Beaumarchais' account for supplies, etc., as stated by himself ..... | 6,274,844 |
| | 1,426,787 |

Whatever may be said of the above method of stating the account, surely there is no ground for the statement of Bayley and Borah that Beaumarchais was over-paid *by the United States*. We received supplies, over and above those paid for, to the full value of a million livres, for which we refused to make payment. Our excuse for the refusal was that the French Government had paid for them. This the French Government persis-

tently denied, and stated that the million in question had been given Beaumarchais to be used for a secret political purpose in the interest of the American cause, and that he had accounted for the same to Vergennes and to the King.

Loménie, Beaumarchais' principal biographer, advances the opinion, without sufficient evidence, it seems to me, that the three millions, which he says Beaumarchais received from France and Spain, were all used in the purchase of supplies, but he adds that the losses sustained through the capture of his ships by the English cruisers and through his transactions with individual states of the Union amounted to considerably more than three millions. He thinks, therefore, that Vergennes, who was thoroughly conversant with Beaumarchais' affairs, approved of his asking full payment for the supplies actually delivered, even though some of them may have been originally intended as gifts from the Crown. It is true that Beaumarchais had to assume all the risk of getting the supplies to America, as Congress refused to pay for those captured by the English cruisers. His losses in transactions with Virginia and South Carolina were due to the rapid depreciation of state currency. Jefferson, in a letter to Beaumarchais'

agent, expressed his mortification at the losses sustained, through depreciation of the currency, by one "who has merited so well of us." [8]

There is little doubt that Beaumarchais' espousal of the American cause proved his financial ruin. In view of his great services, it is a matter of regret that he and his heirs were not given a full measure of justice. His case has frequently been cited by writers as a notable example of the ingratitude of republics. The exact disposition of the so-called "lost million" can never be established, for, after the account was rendered, the vouchers were destroyed. Modern governments, including that of the United States, handle secret service funds in pretty much the same way. Anyone who will take the trouble to examine even casually the twenty-five volumes of Stevens, "Facsimiles of Manuscripts in European Archives Relating to America, 1773–1783," will get some idea of the methods employed by the diplomats of that day and of the amounts of money that were required for gathering information and securing copies of

[8] Loménie, "Beaumarchais et Son Temps," II, 200–204; Kite, "Beaumarchais and the War of American Independence," II, 159, 245; see also Governor Monroe's "Communication to the Legislature relative to the Claim of the Representatives of Beaumarchais against the Commonwealth," Richmond, 1802.

documents. The King of England paid Sir Hugh Elliot, his ambassador at Berlin, one thousand pounds for the expenses he had incurred in connection with the sensational theft of Arthur Lee's papers, one of the most amusing and notorious incidents of the day.[9]

Before concluding this paper it may be well to restate the financial assistance received from France in tabular form. The "lost million" should be placed in the list of gifts from the French Crown. It was so acknowledged by Franklin in the treaty of 1783, and so regarded by the Treasury officials, who deducted that amount from Beaumarchais' accounts. There was never any question about this. The only question at issue was as to whether it was used as a secret service fund or for the purchase of supplies. In agreeing to the final compromise the United States Government committed itself to the view that it had been used as a secret service fund and that, therefore, Beaumarchais' heirs were entitled to payment for the supplies delivered. Even if Senator Borah insists that our obligations to Beaumarchais were fully met, he cannot dismiss the eight

[9] Stevens, Facsimiles, No. 1482.

millions of gifts and the two millions of remitted interest.

Gifts, for which repayment was never demanded or offered:

| | Livres |
|---|---|
| 1776, June 10 | 1,000,000 |
| 1777 | 2,000,000 |
| 1781 | 6,000,000 |
| 1782, Interest remitted on loan of 1778, approximately | 2,000,000 |
| | 11,000,000 |

| Loans, repaid in full: | Livres |
|---|---|
| 1777, from the Farmers-General | 1,000,000 |
| 1778, advanced in 21 instalments, 1778–1782 | 18,000,000 |
| 1781, obtained by France from Holland | 10,000,000 |
| 1783, advanced through Franklin | 6,000,000 |
| | 35,000,000 [10] |

This paper has been limited to a discussion of the financial aid rendered to the United States by France during the Revolutionary War, but it should be remembered that France also rendered

[10] Malloy, "Treaties of the United States," Vol. I, pp. 483–490; Bayley's "History of National Loans of the United States," Tenth Census Reports, Vol. VII, pp. 299–309.

indispensable military and naval aid at critical periods. The battle of Saratoga did not end the war, as Senator Borah appears to think. He forgets that the darkest period of the war—the long winter at Valley Forge—came after Saratoga, and that the final surrender at Yorktown was brought about by the timely appearance in the Chesapeake of the French fleet under Count de Grasse and the rapid movement of Washington with Rochambeau's expeditionary French force from the Hudson to the historic Virginia peninsula, where Lafayette, at the head of an American force, was holding Cornwallis in check. There were more Frenchmen engaged in the operation at Yorktown, soldiers and sailors, than there were Americans.

# WHAT ELSE COULD FRANCE HAVE DONE?

[Remarks of Hon. John Jacob Rogers of Massachusetts.]

In the House of Representatives Wednesday, May 21, 1924

MR. ROGERS of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, under the leave to extend my remarks in the RECORD I include a speech I made before the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, Friday afternoon, May 16, 1924, which is as follows:

During the last year or two criticism has, both in Europe and in America, been leveled at France because of her international program and policy. Much of this—I believe nearly all of it—is based upon either the misunderstanding or the overlooking of essential facts. Throughout my paper I ask you to keep in the background of your minds two questions: First, what else could France have done? Second, what would the United States have done in France's place?

Let us picture France at the moment of the armistice. The geography of Europe was unchanged. France by victory had not acquired the protective oceans of the United States or the defensive channels of England. Germany, an unrepentant and virtually unscathed enemy, was still next door. Upon the stand-

ards of France perched victory; but only after four years of unexampled horror, during which her soil had without intermission been the battle ground and the graveyard of the world. Her public debt had increased thirteenfold. In respect to finances, as well as to man power, she was shattered almost unto death. She had the memory that twice within a half century had she been invaded and almost wiped off the earth by the same relentless enemy. Mr. Pierrepont Noyes has this afternoon accurately phrased her natural—even, indeed, her inevitable—emotions when he said:

> "After the war France felt herself in greater danger than ever. Germany was still Germany, with a population of more than 60,000,000 very effective people—effective from a military standpoint and even more so as regards economic ability to produce the mechanical requirements for modern warfare. Furthermore, it was a Germany likely to nurse during many years a desire for revenge."

President Wilson remarked to me in the spring of 1919: "France feels an almost superstitious awe of Germany." Was that emotion strange? Was any other emotion possible? If we keep always in our minds the thought of that "superstitious awe," much of the confused history of the past five years becomes clarified.

In 1918 and 1919 France had two dominant emotions. The one was a yearning for complete security; the other was the insistence that she be repaid by the vanquished for at least part of the damage which she, innocent of wrong, had sustained. Security and repara-

tion. These were the objectives in 1918. I believe they have been the objectives ever since.

During the negotiations of the first six months of 1919, which culminated in the treaty of Versailles, France never faltered. She pursued single mindedly the path to her goal. Was there anything in her conduct during those months which was strange or unnatural? She sought to draw the fangs of her enemy. Should we have done anything different in her place? Is there the slightest evidence either of imperialism or of militarism in her program or action during that period? She sought merely safety—the right to be let alone. It is always difficult to dogmatize concerning the state of mind of a nation or of an individual. But to my mind it is clear beyond argument that the France of 1919 was seeking only what any patriotic nation in her place would have insistently sought.

Has the state of mind of France become fundamentally altered in the intervening five years? That is the charge against her made by many. It is worth while to examine the basis for this charge. It may be subdivided into four specifications:

(1) That her maintenance of a considerable army and particularly her expansion of aircraft evidence a militaristic and imperialistic aspiration.

But is this reasonable? Was there any encouragement in the events at the Paris conference, or elsewhere in the world, to a policy of demobilization? Would we have whittled our Army to impotence if we had been in the situation and plight of France?

Take the matter of aircraft. It can not be questioned that French airplanes are more numerous to-day than at the time of the armistice. This is the one element in the French policy that more than any other has alarmed Britain.

Yet is it not entirely consistent with a reasonable defense policy to assume that France has always intended her aircraft for use to defend herself against further attack by Germany? Even if she were mistaken in fearing such an attack, was not, after all, her fear a most reasonable one? Certainly there can be no certainty that France even thought of conflict with Britain in her aviation policy and development.

We must ascertain as best we can the purpose of France in expanding her aircraft. To me the preponderance of the evidence is strongly to the effect that the French policy in this regard was and is wholly defensive. Again I say the United States would have done the same or more if we had been in the place of France. France could not afford the construction of an adequate fleet of capital ships. Aircraft was the cheapest defense. Hence her aviation policy. It should be noted that the French budget for national defense is to-day but 41 per cent of our own and but 37 per cent of England's. We are only in remote danger of a transoceanic attack by another great power. Yet the mere suggestion that we are falling below the 5–5–3 ratio of naval strength arouses this country to alarm and to action. The critics of France choose to forget that her naval ratio, voluntarily assumed, is: United States,

5; Great Britain, 5; France, 1.75. I believe it to be the fact that France's use of her military and naval strength has been moderate and free from truculence. Italy is sometimes said to have become a swashbuckling nation. I do not believe that indictment can fairly be laid, on the facts, to the door of France. Bear in mind, too, that France has constantly been reducing the size of her army. Does that policy point to a hidden aspiration to wage offensive warfare or to annex territories beyond her present boundaries?

(2) It is alleged that the Rhineland and Bavarian separatist movements had the strong though secret espousal and assistance of the French Government. In my opinion there is not a scintilla of evidence that the French Government, as such, at any stage has lent its support to the separatists in Germany.

Of course, very many Frenchmen have favored an independent Rhineland region as the best method of permanently securing the safety of France. To my mind there is much force in the arguments from a French standpoint in favor of the desirability of the movement. But I repeat that there is no evidence that the responsible Government of France has at any time lent aid or comfort thereto. It would even have been natural if such aid and comfort had been extended. A buffer state is a time-honored defensive against an adjacent foe. Yet France withstood the temptation. Still less did she desire to annex the Rhineland region. She knew, from her own bitter experience, the danger to peace of a reversed Alsace-Lorraine arrangement.

But assuming she had gone as far as her enemies assert. Are we in the United States in a position to cast the first stone? Let us think over the story of Mexico in 1847 and in 1914; of Panama; of Hawaii; and of the Philippines, before we condemn our sister Republic.

(3) It is alleged by the critics of France that in her dealings with the smaller powers of Europe she has shown a militaristic or imperialistic policy. But here again is it not natural that she should seek as a measure of defense to effect alliances and to promote the strength of the smaller powers of Europe which border upon Germany or which may hinder the spread westward of bolshevism? The formation of alliances is certainly consistent with sound protective measures. A cordon of states imbued with the French viewpoint and adjacent to Germany may unquestionably be regarded as a safeguard against trouble from Germany. Should not we have done the same if we had been in the position of France? Remember always, too, the "superstitious awe" phrase of Wilson.

In my deliberate judgment every phase of France's program as she has dealt with the smaller powers of Europe is consistent with a determined effort on her part to maintain the status quo in Europe as established by the treaty of Versailles. Nothing sinister or offensive need be predicated upon her program in this regard.

(4) And now we come to the apex of the indictment hurled against France by her critics—her policy relative to occupying the Ruhr.

As to this a United States Senator, a member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, said within a fortnight:

> " The invasion of the Ruhr is as immoral as the invasion of Belgium."

It is difficult to argue against so extreme and, as I believe, so utterly unfounded a charge as this. Let us first ask ourselves if the occupation of the Ruhr was necessarily either militaristic or imperialistic. Clearly the answer must be in the negative. There was no inherent impropriety in the action, as I shall undertake to prove. Was not the program of the Ruhr consistent with the pursuance of the policy of obtaining reparation? Why should not the responsible head of the French Government be believed when he said publicly within a year:

> " We have no intention of annexing any portion of German territory and we dismiss with the contempt they deserve the accusations of imperialism brought against France. We have, therefore, no mad idea of confiscating the Ruhr, but we shall hold it until we are paid our due."

I repeat with emphasis that it certainly can be plausibly maintained that the occupation might promote the pursuit of reparation. Further, I remind you that when France entered the Ruhr a little over a year ago she was desperate, and that the occupation seemed the only available method of securing reparations, without which she faced national bankruptcy and disaster.

These things being so, there remains the inquiry as to the legality of the operations in the Ruhr. Unless their illegality can be established, is there any just cause to condemn France out of hand for doing what she did?

At this point I desire to quote the clause of the treaty of Versailles on the strength of which she embarked upon her great experiment:

> "The measures which the allied and associated powers shall have the right to take in case of voluntary default by Germany, and which Germany agrees not to regard as acts of war, may include economic and financial prohibitions and reprisals and, in general, such other measures as the respective governments may determine to be necessary in the circumstances."

To establish the legality of the so-called invasion it is necessary to prove:

(a) The fact that Germany was in default.

(b) The fact that it was proper to occupy the Ruhr, assuming the fact of default by Germany.

(c) The fact that single-handed action by France was permissible if the first two elements became established.

Was Germany in default between 1919 and 1923? The answer is so obviously in the affirmative that perhaps it seems superfluous to establish the point by citations.

Five different times were the defaults declared by the responsible spokesmen for the allied powers:

(a) In April, 1920, at San Remo, the Allies stated that—

> "Germany had not carried out her undertakings as regards either the destruction of war material, or the reduction of the army, or the coal deliveries, or reparations, or the cost of armies of occupation. She does not even seem to have considered the means of fulfilling her obligations. The Allies unanimously declare that they can not tolerate any longer breaches of the treaty of Versailles, that the treaty must be carried out."

(b) On June 30, 1920, the Reparation Commission notified to the allied governments the default of Germany as regards coal deliveries.

(c) On March 3, 1921, Mr. Lloyd George, speaking as president of the Supreme Council and officially for the allied powers, said to the German delegation:

> "We are convinced that the German Government is not merely in default but deliberately in default."

(d) On May 5, 1921, the Supreme Council resolved that—

> "The German Government is still in default in the fulfilment of the obligations incumbent upon it under the terms of the treaty of Versailles."

(e) And finally, in January, 1923, the Reparations Commission, by a majority vote, declared the German Reich was in general default as regards all her obligations contracted under the treaty of Versailles.

Default being thus inescapably established, was occupation of the Ruhr by France an appropriate and lawful consequence? Certainly the language of the treaty is very broad. Certainly the Allies throughout the post-war period unanimously regarded occupation of German soil as a possible and even probable remedy for German defaults. Even Great Britain, which was so opposed to the occupation of the Ruhr when it came, had, in several instances, joined in the threat to occupy a part of German soil. In one instance she joined in the actual occupation. Let us examine these instances:

(a) In April, 1920, at San Remo, the Allies stated that they were "resolved to take all steps, even including, if it be necessary, the occupation of a further part of German territory."

(b) On July 9, 1920, at Spa, the Allies threatened to proceed to the further occupation of German territory, whether it be the region of the Ruhr or some other.

(c) In January, 1921, in Paris, the Allies announced their intention, if Germany did not alter her position, to impose "sanctions," including "occupation of the Ruhr or any other territory."

(d) At the London meeting of the Supreme Council held in February and March, 1921, of which mention has already been made, a distinct threat was made to "occupy the towns of Duisbourg, Ruhrort, and Dusseldorf on the right bank of the Rhine." The occupation of the three towns followed, British troops joining the French troops for that purpose.

(e) At a conference of the allied governments held

in London in May, 1921, the Supreme Council passed resolutions—

> "To proceed forthwith with such preliminary measures as may be required for the occupation of the Ruhr Valley by the allied forces on the Rhine * * * failing fulfilment by the German Government * * * to proceed to the occupation of the valley of the Ruhr and to take all other military and naval measures that may be required."

Such occupation was to continue so long as Germany was in default.

In the light of the foregoing extracts from the records of the Allies there can be no dissent from the proposition that all the Allies, including Great Britain, regarded, and I believe rightly regarded, Germany as in default and occupation of the Ruhr as an appropriate consequence of that default. Was joint action by the Allies nevertheless necessary? Bonar Law, later Prime Minister of England and one of the fairest of allied statesmen, thought not. On October 28, 1920, he stated in the House of Commons that—

> "The term of paragraph 18 clearly left to each of the respective Governments to determine upon the action that it may seem necessary to take under the said paragraph."

The British for domestic reasons were bitterly opposed to the Ruhr occupation. Early in January, 1923, Bonar Law was in Paris making a last effort to avert the French action. On January 5, 1923, he

became convinced that his mission was hopeless. He prepared to return to London. On that day he said to Poincaré—

> "If I believed that we could get the money out of Germany by applying the French plan, I should support it."

In effect, then, he bade the French Godspeed in their great undertaking. He did not question the right, but the practicability, of the plan. The legality was not, and in my judgment could not, be questioned by the British.

So we come back to the observation of the distinguished United States Senator who was unable to differentiate between the occupation of the Ruhr and the invasion of Belgium. Two differences seem fairly obvious. The one was in direct furtherance of a treaty; the other was in direct violation of a treaty. The one was the first step in an aggressive war of conquest; the other was an effort to secure the payments to which a peace-loving country believed it had an inalienable right.

I assert, then, that the occupation of the Ruhr was a natural step to take. It is said by some Americans that the invasion of the Ruhr provoked a German resentment which makes a new war inevitable. On the other hand, countless occurrences since the armistice have given the French ample ground for the conviction that German resentment was inevitable and unquenchable from the moment the Versailles signatures were affixed and that the occupation of the Ruhr neither added thereto nor subtracted therefrom.

To my way of thinking, the extraordinary thing about the French-Ruhr policy is not the fact that they occupied but that they waited four years before they occupied. I doubt if such an example of national patience under equal provocation can be found in the history of the world. Certainly it can not be found in the history of the United States. Take the case of Venezuela; take the case of the destruction of the *Maine;* was the attitude of the United States in either instance notable for calmness or protracted patience? In neither instance do I criticize the United States policy or viewpoint. But I do assert that if the United States had been in the place of France we should have occupied the Ruhr not later than 1920.

France took the only step, in my judgment, which a patriotic nation could take. There wasn't anything else for her to do. Her action was a legal action and the results to France have justified the gravity of the step which she took sixteen months ago.

It may safely be said that without the Ruhr there would have been no possibility of such a frame of mind in Germany as would have led to the formulation of the Dawes report and its probable acceptance by Germany.

Weighing the German state of mind a year and a half ago and the inconvenience to the world which in the minds of many has resulted from the French policy, history may regard the Ruhr occupation as a worthwhile means to a highly desirable end. But whether the world was inconvenienced or not, France took the step which she had the right to take and which, in my

judgment, she was abundantly justified from every national standpoint in taking.

I suppose there will be some who will say, even though they admit all the facts as I have recited them, that nevertheless France's motive throughout has been an aggressive or destructive one. My own view is that this conception is not tenable. I believe the French to be a peace-loving people. As I have said before, it is difficult to be dogmatic concerning another's state of mind. We can certainly assert, at least, that the foregoing facts are consistent with a sincere desire on the part of France for peace at home and abroad.

Let me set forth some of the elements that seem to make this viewpoint the more probable, and, indeed, the only probable, one.

The French are a thrifty race and hate taxation. This state of mind resists appropriations beyond the bare necessities of national defense. We all know that these have been large enough in all conscience in the last ten years, not only in France but in countries as remote from Europe as the United States. Expenditures for offense are anathema to the French. The elections of last Sunday seem to indicate that even the program of Poincaré, which I do not regard as one of offense, may be deemed by the majority of the French people to involve excessive burdens upon them.

Indeed, is it probable that a modern republic, a truly representative government, would ever be militaristic? The peasant class of France is, and always has been, a peace-loving population.

Let me quote the words of a skilled observer on his return within two or three weeks from a careful survey of France.

> "Is France militaristic, imperialistic? That, again, is a familiar American question. As to this, I can only say that during many weeks in Paris, in which I met men of every rank and station in life—soldiers, statesmen, simple citizens—I never heard a single word spoken which suggested anything beyond the profoundest desire for peace."

Of course in any country one can always find extremists in any view. In the United States you can find both jingoes and extreme pacifists in large number. In saying what I say of the French people, I am dealing with what I believe to be the majority—the warp and woof of the nation. Is any other attitude conceivable after what France endured from 1914 to 1918—to say nothing of the succeeding years? Self-preservation and nothing more must be the national policy. Self-aggrandizement can have no room in the breasts of the French people.

We saw the general restlessness of France when the three German towns were occupied in 1921. We see renewed evidences of restlessness now in the elections of Sunday. While these elections are not to be interpreted as likely to result in a withdrawal from the Ruhr, yet the swing to the left is certainly not a swing toward additional military demonstration. If anything, the reverse is the fact.

The French as a people have been believers in the

League of Nations. If they had been actuated by hopes of aggression would they have been likely to espouse the "cause of the covenant"?

But most of all they showed what underlay their whole thought and even existence in their intense yearning for the guaranty treaty with the United States and Great Britain. In the failure to ratify that treaty, in my judgment, the United States took the gravest possible step in its effect upon the remainder of the world. That treaty was in 1919 the greatest contribution to peace which America could have made. Our ratification would have meant a complete change of the streams of history. The fact that France so eagerly wished the guaranty treaty—a defensive treaty solely—is the best refutation of a militaristic state of mind.

You remember the small boy who, with awe-stricken wonder, listened to his father's comments after he had pounded his finger with a hammer. He said, "Mother, the words were the same as the minister used last Sunday, but they were arranged differently." The facts which Mr. Noyes and I rely upon are substantially the same, but to me the evidence seems clearly to overthrow his conclusions as to French objectives.

Of course, it is true that for the immediate recovery of Europe a policy of cancellation all around—a policy of letting bygones be bygones—had in 1919 much to commend it. It might well have hastened Europe's recovery. But would you and I have acted differently from France? Had not she a right to seek security and repayment? Was it reasonable to ask her to give up

either one? Does the evidence of the past five years give us in the United States a plausible ground for criticizing bitterly our great ally?

I repeat, perhaps to weariness, that I regard the conduct of France since the armistice as marked by rare toleration and moderation—and by a patience which is almost unexampled in history. I believe that all the evidence negatives the existence in France of any considerable or controlling body of thought which can fairly be termed aggressive.

I think of France always as a nation shattered by war, fearful of a new attack when the enemy at her gates again sees the opportunity to strike. I think of how France since America was in her cradle has been a true friend of the Western Republic. I think of how we fought side by side in the years of trial, making common cause for the preservation of civilization. And as I ponder these things and many others, it is in my heart to resolve every presumption in favor of our lifelong friend and brave ally. Common understanding, common sympathy, and a common purpose between the United States and France! These should be our aspiration, for from them will come the abiding peace for which the world passionately longs.

# HOW FRANCE AIDED AMERICAN LIBERTY

## "POOR RICHARD" ASKED AND RECEIVED MONEY TO CARRY ON WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

By Professor Louis C. Karpinski, of University of Michigan, and Charles Bache, of Philadelphia

(Copyright, 1925, by Franklin Bache.)

War is an expensive institution, turning men from productive enterprises to destructive activities. Not only the actual instruments of warfare are used up but all the nation's resources of food, of transportation, of clothing, and of finance are immediately devoted, in the event of war, to the successful prosecution of the same. One hundred and fifty years ago our colonial forefathers embarked upon such an enterprise, devoting themselves without reservation to the cause of freedom and, in a measure, pledging future resources to attain the victory.

The financing of the American Revolution was an absolutely essential factor in the attainment of victory. At the outbreak of hostilities not enough powder and guns were available to continue for a

year and the American sources of supply were utterly inadequate. Washington wrote at Christmas time in 1775: "Our want of powder is inconceivable," and three weeks later not a pound was left in his magazines.

Recently the historian, O. W. Stephenson, at the University of Michigan, made an exhaustive study of the sources of the powder used by the Americans in the first two and one-half years of the conflict. Mr. Stephenson has established from newspapers and from letters and official documents of the time that two million and a quarter pounds of powder were used in this period. Of this amount two million pounds, ninety per cent, came from France while less than one-tenth was produced locally or was on hand from the English war with France of 1753–1762.

No historian to-day would dispute the fact that American success at that time would have been impossible without this aid from France.

In financing the American Revolution all the neutral states of Europe were approached for loans. They were overrun by agents both of Congress and of the separate states. But the foreign loans upon which the success of the American Revolution was based were made only by and

through France. Records of foreign financial aid show only French from 1776 until 1781.

Just about the time of the Battle of Saratoga, late in 1778, which was the first real gleam of sunshine for the American forces, Benjamin Franklin was at a dinner where someone remarked about the " fine spectacle " which the war made. " Yes," Franklin remarked, adding characteristically, " but the spectators do not pay." The surrender of Burgoyne came at a time when the French support might have weakened. Beaumarchais was at Passy with Franklin and immediately drove posthaste to Paris to notify Vergennes and the King. In his haste Beaumarchais broke an arm, but he carried the news.

In 1881 Rafael A. Bayley, of the United States Treasury, published as a special report in the U. S. Census of 1880 a work, " The National Loans of the United States, from July 4, 1776, to June 30, 1880." Bayley notes that in addition to loans, *French subsidies or gifts were granted* between 1776 to 1779 *to the extent of ten millions of livres.*

On October 2, 1780, in a letter to John Jay, Franklin stated:

> " At length I got over a Reluctance that was almost invincible and made another Application to the Govern-

ment here for more Money . . . my Memorial was received in the kindest and most friendly Manner, and tho' the Court here is not without its embarrassments on Account of Money, I was told to make myself easy, for that I should be assisted with what was necessary . . . Being much pleased with the generous behavior just experienced I presented another Paper, proposing in order to ease the Government here (which has been so willing to ease us), that the Congress might furnish their Army in America with Provisions in part of the Payment for the Sum lent us. This proposition I was told was well taken; but, it being considered, that the States having the Enemy in their Country, and obliged to make great expenses for the Present Campaign, the furnishing so much Provisions as the French Army would need, might straiten and be inconvenient to the Congress, his Majesty did not at this time think it right to accept the offer. You will not wonder at my loving this good prince. He will win the Hearts of all America."

Indicative of our absolute dependence on French aid to continue the war to a successful end is the following expression from a letter of General Washington:

"Our present situation makes one of two things essential to us; a Peace, or the most vigorous Aid of our Allies, particularly in the Article of *Money*."

This letter of Washington's was quoted by

Franklin on February 13, 1781, in transmitting a letter from Congress to the King asking an additional loan.

To Samuel Huntington, on March 12, 1781, Franklin wrote in connection with the request from Congress for a loan of twenty-five million livres:

> " He (Vergennes) assured me of the King's good will to the United States; remarking, however, that, being on the spot, I must be sensible of the great expense France was actually engaged in, and the difficulty of providing for it, which rendered the lending us twenty-five millions at present impracticable . . . but that . . . his Majesty had resolved to grant them the sum of six millions not as a loan but as a free gift."

Concerning these gifts Franklin wrote to Robert R. Livingston on August 12, 1782, as follows:

> " All the accounts against us . . . made the debt amount to the even sum of eighteen millions, exclusive of the Holland loan (ten millions), for which the King is guarantee. I send a copy of the instrument to Mr. Morris. In reading it, you will discover several fresh marks of the King's goodness towards us, amounting to the value of near two millions. These, added to the free gifts before made to us at different times, form an object of at least twelve millions, for which no returns but that of gratitude and friendship are expected. These, I hope may be everlasting."

Subsequently, on March 7, 1783, after securing in times of great stress six more millions, Franklin acknowledges the gift of the first year's interest on this new loan. French loans and gifts were the only foreign aid received except the one million from Spain, granted at the request of France. Dutch loans began first in 1782, after the preliminary peace negotiations.

The French gifts and loans to America were due largely to two men, Caron de Beaumarchais and Benjamin Franklin. The one represented the element of comic opera in a highly successful rôle while the other represented the American democracy, to the awakening public of France, a symbol of a new age. Both were absolutely devoted to the American cause and probably neither would have been as effective without the other.

The claim to fame of Beaumarchais in the field of comic opera is not to be disputed. Figaro is a character bearing striking resemblance to Beaumarchais himself. Not only on his own part did the author prosecute romantic escapades but on behalf of the King and the Court this son of a watchmaker participated in intrigues and the aftermath of romantic meetings. Upon this type of

material are founded his plays, rendered immortal also in music by the genius of a Mozart and a Rossini. These plays contributed no little to the French Revolution.

The time of 1776 to 1779 was not a time when the Americans could pick and choose their friends, and the Comic Opera King served them more devotedly and more effectively than had he been a great statesman. Most fortunately Beaumarchais had the ear of the King and the facile pen which enabled him to put the American cause effectively before that amiable monarch. These efforts began in 1775 and were crowned with success in the recognition of the United States in the Treaty of Amity and Commerce early in 1778.

On June 10, 1776, Beaumarchais received one million livres from the French Government to be expended for supplies for the Americans. A second million was obtained from Spain through the intercession of France. A third million came from the Farmers-General of France, to be repaid in shipments of tobacco, indigo, and other American products.

Even before these loans, arms and powder had been gathered by Beaumarchais for shipment to

America. A fictitious firm, Roderique Hortalez and Company, was organized in June, 1776. To this firm the French arsenals sold powder and cannon which were providentally not stamped with the French Royal Arms. For two years France participated in this fashion before openly espousing the American cause. These initial and determining steps were made possible by Beaumarchais.

In Francis Wharton's "Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence," published by the U. S. Government in 1889, in six volumes, the statement is made: "For nearly a year prior to the arrival of Franklin he (Beaumarchais) was the exclusive business agent under whose superintendence supplies were sent to America, and by these supplies the American armies received material without which they could not have maintained themselves in the field."

In the public press from the conclusion of our War of Independence down to the present day, the loans made by France and by Beaumarchais have been the subject of almost endless dispute. The loans were all eventually repaid. But the subsidies, stated by no authority at less than ten million livres, were gifts and never have been repaid.

The English historian of the American Revolution, Trevelyan, notes with some satisfaction that the war in which France involved herself with England at this time, by this aid to America, cost France "nearly a milliard and a quarter . . . and the royal government of France . . . was submerged in an ocean of bankruptcy."

James Breck Perkins, in his "France and the American Revolution," says:

> "France secured the independence of her American allies, but the material advantages she obtained were small recompense for a war which had cost her seven hundred and seventy-two millions."

Further, the interest on loans made by France during 1779 and 1782 was forgiven until 1783. Little interest was paid until 1790, ten years after the loans, as American conditions were very unsettled until after 1789 and the adoption of the Constitution.

Albert Gallatin, later Secretary of the Treasury, in his "Sketch of the Finances of the United States," published in New York in 1796, gives the arrearages of interest which were not commonly paid when due. This brought the total debt to more than 43,000,000 on December 31, 1789.

As conceded by all authorities the minimum of the Gifts of Money for which payment has never been asked by France or offered by America:

| *Gifts never paid* | | *Livres* |
|---|---|---|
| 1777 | Before Treaty of Alliance between France and America (at least) ..... | 2,000,000 |
| 1781 | Though petition for loan of 25,000,000 is not granted, free gift is made of ..... | 6,000,000 |
| 1782 | Interest and various costs remitted, approximately ..... | 2,000,000 |
| | Total ..... | 10,000,000 |

| *Loans ultimately paid* | | *Livres* |
|---|---|---|
| 1777 | From the Farmers-General ... | 1,000,000 |
| 1781 | Obtained by France from Holland for America ..... | 10,000,000 |
| | Various advances made prior to July 16, 1782, as adjusted, consolidated and agreed to between the two governments on that date ..... | 18,000,000 |
| 1783 | Loan ..... | 6,000,000 |
| | Total ..... | 35,000,000 |

The interest rate was less than the current rate in Europe at the time. In 1783 France was actually paying 7 per cent and charging America 5 and even as little as 4 per cent. The security was not then considered as exceptional, nor even good. Able men like John Jay in Spain and John Adams in Holland found it impossible at this time to negotiate loans for America, although the countries were sympathetically inclined toward the colonists.

Payments of principal began to fall due upon the French loans in 1787 but at this time the chaotic condition of affairs in America made payments of principal and interest equally uncertain. Not until after 1789 was any attempt made to pay the debt incurred. In 1790 the events of the French Revolution made a settlement imperative. At this time some twenty-four millions of livres were paid and the loans not yet due were replaced by other securities so that not until 1815 could the French debt of the Revolution be said to be fully extinguished.

In the War of the Revolution, France not only made us loans, when every other nation refused, but remitted interest for long periods, extended times for payment of principal and in addition *gave* us millions of livres.

# I

## OUR DEBT TO FRANCE

By James Hosmer Penniman, Litt. D.

"Among all the innumerable expressions of sympathy, all the kindnesses showered by you on France, none touches us so deeply as what you are doing for the orphans of our heroic dead. Our children are our most precious possession, our joy and our hope, and there is no surer way to our hearts than to help these pitiful victims of this war for the liberation of the world."

—Marshal Joffre.

Washington weighed his words when he wrote that our obligation to France calls for "the most unalterable gratitude," and Joseph Choate said that he could find no language adequate to express what America owes to France. Though the great actors in the drama of our Revolution sleep in the fields of silence, their deeds remain eloquent, and it is well to recall their words, which are so modest when they tell of their own actions and so generous and appreciative when they describe those of their allies. They make it perfectly clear that France came in our hour of supreme need and exerted the determining influence, when our armies and our credit were all but exhausted by the long struggle.

Early in 1776 Congress sent Silas Deane, a graduate of Yale of the class of 1758, as commissioner to France to propose an offensive and defensive alliance and a treaty of commerce. Vergennes, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, received Deane with cordiality and benevolence and told him to consider himself under the immediate protection of the King of France, and in case of any insult or molestation to complain directly to himself and to depend on receiving the most satisfactory redress; that, though talk of an alliance was premature, his government would show its good will by allowing the Americans to purchase supplies secretly.

There was then no factory in America where muskets or cannon could be made in any quantity, and it was almost impossible to obtain gunpowder. July 20th Deane had another interview by appointment at Versailles with Vergennes and was promised 40,000 muskets. Vergennes also proposed to have the arms of France erased from 200 brass cannon, if it could be done without weakening them, and if not he promised that others should be cast in the King's foundries. Vergennes sent De Chaumont, a wealthy man, to Deane with priced

samples of the uniforms worn in the French Army, and De Chaumont voluntarily offered to become security to the amount of 1,000,000 francs for the purchase of clothing for the Americans.

Vergennes' knowledge of European politics was considered superior to that of any other man of his time, so that the services which he was able to render to America were of inestimable value. When Vergennes died in 1788, Franklin said that it was a great loss to France, to Europe, to America and to mankind.

The decision to aid America was largely due to the efforts of that extraordinary Frenchman, Beaumarchais, well known as the author of the "Barber of Seville" and the "Marriage of Figaro." Beaumarchais is comparable to Sheridan in wit, stagecraft and in his ability to satirize the follies of his time, and his polemical papers resemble those of Swift. Through his writings he had become a leader of public opinion. In the "Marriage of Figaro" he showed clearly the dangerous condition of France. He first made plain that the balance of power in Europe was to be found in America. As early as September, 1775, Beaumarchais declared that America was lost to

the mother country, and early in 1776 he urged the King of France to give secret aid to the Americans, saying,

> "If your majesty has no more skilful man to employ, I am ready to take the matter in charge and will be responsible for the treaty without compromising anyone, persuaded that my zeal will better supplement my lack of dexterity than the dexterity of another could replace my zeal. The Americans are as well placed as possible; army, fleet, provisions, courage, everything is excellent; but without powder and engineers how can they conquer or how even can they defend themselves? Are we willing to let them perish rather than loan them one or two millions? Are we afraid of losing the money?"

With the connivance of Vergennes, Beaumarchais organized the commercial firm of Hortalez and Company. "You will found your house," he was instructed, "and at your own risk and perils you will provision the Americans with arms and munitions and objects of equipment and whatever is necessary to support the war. You shall not demand money of the Americans, because they have none, but you shall ask returns in commodities of their soil, the sale of which we will facilitate in our country." American tobacco, rice and wheat

were then especially valuable in Europe. Agents of Beaumarchais met the captains of American ships on their arrival in France, aided them to dispose of their cargoes and rendered any other services in their power. For instance, when five vessels arrived from America with fish, a prohibited article, the French officials informed Deane that if the vessels came from Congress they should be permitted to unload and to sell their cargoes.

May 2, 1776, the French Government advanced to Beaumarchais 1,000,000 francs for the purchase of supplies for the Americans, and two months later he received another million from Spain, which was paid through the treasury of France. Within a year Beaumarchais had sent eight shiploads of military stores, drawn largely from royal arsenals and valued at more than 6,000,000 francs. For a long time he was the exclusive agent of France, and through him supplies were sent without which Washington's forces could not have existed. Beaumarchais obtained over 200 cannon, 25,000 muskets, 200,000 pounds of powder, 20 or 30 brass mortars and clothing and tents for 25,000 men. These he loaded on ships obtained by himself. At one time he fitted out ten merchantmen

and equipped a man-of-war to escort them. Silas Deane wrote Congress:

> "I should have never completed what I have but for the generous, the indefatigable and spirited exertions of Monsieur Beaumarchais, to whom the United States are on every account greatly indebted; more so than to any other person on this side of the water."

When Beaumarchais was himself struggling with financial difficulties, he wrote:

> "Through all these annoyances the news from America overwhelms me with joy. Brave, brave people, their war-like conduct justifies my esteem and the noble enthusiasm felt for them in France."

Though Franklin was seventy when Congress unanimously elected him on the first ballot a commissioner to France, there is no exaggeration in saying that his services surpass those of any other American diplomat in any period of our history. Afflicted with the infirmities of age, his mind remained bright, his good nature undiminished and he cheerfully undertook the dangerous voyage in order to serve his country. He came on the *Reprisal,* which made the trip from land to land in thirty days. It carried indigo for the account of Congress worth £3000. On the way over it captured two British ships worth £4000.

Franklin arrived in Paris in December, 1776. At first he took lodgings in the Rue de l'Université, but in a few days he withdrew to Passy, where he lived nine years. Franklin described his residence as "a fine house, situated in a neat village on high ground, half a mile from Paris, with a large garden to walk in." The house was the property of De Chaumont, who wrote John Adams in September, 1778:

> "When I consecrated my house to Doctor Franklin and his associates who might live with him, I made it fully understood that I should expect no compensation, because I perceived that you had need of all your means to send to the succor of your country or to relieve the distresses of your countrymen escaping from the chains of their enemies. I pray you, sir, to permit this arrangement to remain, which I made when the fate of your country was doubtful. When she shall enjoy all her splendor such sacrifices on my part will be superfluous or unworthy of her; but at present they may be useful, and I am happy in offering them to you."

He added that it was a good thing "to have immortalized my house by receiving into it Doctor Franklin and his associates."

That a man of such erudition and distinction as Franklin should come from the colonies was a paradox which delighted French society. The

wit of his writing was particularly appreciated; the sayings of "le bon-homme Richard" were quoted all over France, and the clergy advised the people to take them to heart. France was filled with medals, busts and pictures of Franklin, so that he wrote his daughter that the numbers sold were incredible and "have made your father's face as well known as the moon." Among the powdered heads of Paris he wore his own gray hair, a fur cap and spectacles, but the old man in his brown suit made more impression than the most glittering ambassador.

Long before their government took up our cause most Frenchmen individually sympathized with us, so that in order to preserve the semblance of neutrality, it was necessary to prohibit the discussion of the war in the cafés of Paris. Republican literature was widely read, and the Declaration of Independence was received with enthusiasm. John Adams wrote of the French in 1778:

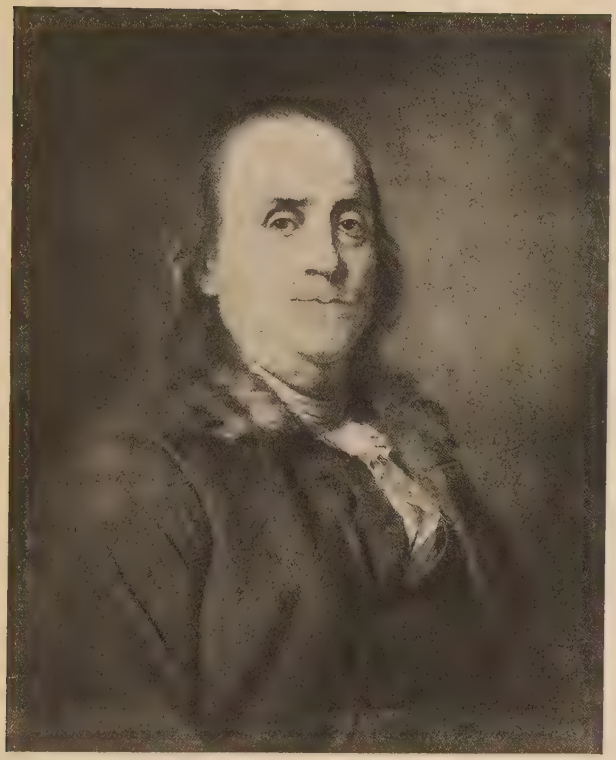
> "There is no people in the world who take so much pains to please, nor any whose endeavors in this way have more success. Their arts and manners, taste and language, are more respected in Europe than those of any other nation."

Buckle states:

> "More new truths concerning the external world were discovered in France during the latter part of the eighteenth century than during all the previous periods put together."

People crowded to lectures on chemistry and physics as if they were plays. Franklin was a member of the French Academy of Sciences and attended its meetings regularly, and his experiments with the kite were as well known in Paris as in Philadelphia.

Distinguished as a man of science, a man of letters and a man of broad humanity, Franklin was learned above all other men in the philosophy of life, and he had attained a ripe old age without losing faith in mankind. He found his happiness in that of his fellowmen. He was equally at home with common men and with scholars and princes, for he was able to comprehend every one's point of view. No man understood the present better than he, and few had a more prophetic vision into the future. A keen observer, of wisdom, judgment and sagacity, he did his work so easily that it seemed easy work until some one else tried to do it. He had snatched the lightning from the clouds,



THE DUPLESSIS PORTRAIT OF FRANKLIN

and was now doing his utmost to wrest the scepter of the thirteen colonies from the tyrant.

Ten days after Franklin's arrival he had a secret interview with Vergennes, who was charmed by his tact and courtesy and said that his conduct was as zealous and patriotic as it was wise and circumspect. Franklin's unswerving loyalty to France in spite of the snares and temptations which were artfully laid for him by our enemies was equaled only by his inflexible devotion to his native land. Before Franklin left for France he had loaned Congress all his available fortune, and during the years of his stay in France the closest scrutiny failed to reveal a single instance of his mismanagement of the public funds. Instead of sending money to its diplomats, the United States drew bills on them. Franklin was able not only to meet the drafts on himself, but was also able to help his colleagues, who were accredited to other courts. He knew how to bide his time; it was sometimes months before the American diplomats could hear from home. For instance, Burgoyne surrendered the 17th of October, 1777, but it was not until the 4th of December that the information reached Paris, where it caused as much rejoicing as if it had been a French victory. Beaumarchais drove

with such furious speed to carry the news that his carriage upset, his arm was cut, and the bone of his neck nearly crushed, but he wrote:

> "The charming news from America is balm to my wounds."

The surrender of Burgoyne, added to the fact that the American Army made an excellent showing at Germantown, so soon after the defeat at the Brandywine, decided the French Government to espouse our cause openly. December 12th Vergennes said of the battle of Germantown:

> "Nothing has struck me so much as General Washington attacking and giving battle to General Howe's Army. To bring troops raised within the year to do this promises everything."

December 17th, as Washington was preparing to go into winter quarters at Valley Forge, though the prospect in America was dark, a bright star of hope arose for us in France, for on that day, Gerard, a secretary of Vergennes, who later became the first minister of France to the United States, and to whom our country is indebted for constant and efficient efforts in our behalf, officially informed Franklin and Deane that France had determined not only to acknowledge, but also to

support the independence of America. The most important treaties in American history are, that with France, signed February 6, 1778, and those with Great Britain, which ended the War of the Revolution. The treaty with France was the first the United States made with any nation. It stated:

> "The essential and direct end of the present defensive alliance is to maintain effectually the liberty, sovereignty, and independence absolute and unlimited of the said United States."

France and the United States mutually engaged not to lay down their arms until this independence should have been assured by the treaty that should terminate the war. Though France could have driven a hard bargain, her only desire was the perpetual friendship of the United States, so that Franklin wrote:

> "France has taken no advantage of our present difficulties to exact terms which we would not willingly grant when established in prosperity and power."

The French alliance was celebrated by Washington's Army at Valley Forge, May 5th. The brigades assembled at 9 o'clock, their chaplains made the announcement, offered up a thanksgiving and delivered a suitable discourse. At half-past

ten a cannon gave the signal to line up for inspection, thirteen guns were fired, there was a running salute of infantry throughout the whole line and at a given signal, the entire army cheered, "Long live the King of France!"

An officer wrote:

> "Last Wednesday was set apart as a day of general rejoicing, when we had a *feu de joie* conducted with the greatest order and regularity. The army made a most brilliant appearance; after which his Excellency dined in public, attended by a band of music. I never was present where there was such unfeigned and perfect joy as was discovered in every countenance. The entertainment was concluded with a number of patriotic toasts, attended with hurrahs. When the General took his leave there was a universal clap, with loud hurrahs, which continued till he had proceeded a quarter of a mile, during which time there was a thousand hats tossed in the air. His Excellency turned round with his retinue and hurrahed several times."

It is interesting to note that there were two opposite causes during the Revolution which made Washington exhibit violent emotion; one was cowardice and the failure of his men to do their duty, the other was the devotion of France.

The alliance between France and the United States was of course a cause of war between France

and Great Britain, and April 13, 1778, five weeks after the signing of the treaty of alliance, Admiral D'Estaing left Toulon for America with twelve ships of the line and four frigates. He was delayed by adverse winds and did not reach the Delaware Capes till July 8th. The British, who had spent the winter in Philadelphia, had evacuated the city June 18th, so that D'Estaing found that their fleet had escaped to New York. He followed them, but, though his ships were superior to the British then in New York, they drew too much water to cross the bar. He then proceeded to Newport. When D'Estaing appeared in Narragansett Bay the British burned the following frigates to prevent their capture by the French: *Juno* 32, *Lark* 32, *Orpheus* 32, *Cerberus* 32, *Kingfisher* 16; and the *Flora* 32 and *Falcon* 18 were sunk. Admiral Howe, having been reinforced, left New York August 6th with eight ships of the line, five 50's, two 44's and a number of smaller vessels. D'Estaing sailed out to battle with him, but a violent storm separated the two fleets. The French were obliged to go to Boston for repairs, and the American troops, deprived of the protection of the French fleet, had to abandon Rhode Island.

During the Revolution Washington had important victories snatched from him by combinations of circumstances which he could not anticipate or control, so that the following sympathetic letter which he wrote D'Estaing September 11, 1778, might have been written after Germantown or Monmouth to the commander-in-chief instead of by him:

> "If the deepest regret that the best concerted enterprise and bravest exertions should have been rendered fruitless by a disaster which human prudence is incapable of foreseeing or preventing can alleviate disappointment, you may be assured that the whole continent sympathizes with you. It will be a consolation to you to reflect that the thinking part of mankind do not form their judgment from events and that their equity will ever attach equal glory to those actions which deserve success as to those which have been crowned with it. It is in the trying circumstances to which your excellency has been exposed that the virtues of a great mind are displayed in their brightest lustre and that the general's character is better known than in the moment of victory. It was yours by every title which can give it, and the adverse element which robbed you of your prize can never deprive you of the glory due to you. Though your success has not been equal to your expectations, yet you have the satisfaction of reflecting that you have rendered essential services to the common cause."

HOUSE IN WHICH FRANKLIN WAS BORN

D'Estaing proceeded to the West Indies, where his operations kept busy forces which otherwise would have been employed against the United States, and the British were obliged also to send there 5000 men from New York. Lafayette wrote Washington that the news of the fleet of D'Estaing "occasioned the evacuation of Philadelphia. Its arrival has opened all the harbors, secured all the coasts, obliged the British navy to be together."

D'Estaing brought with him our friend Gerard, who was the first minister of any foreign power to the United States. France sent him in a manner worthy of a great nation, for he embarked on the *Languedoc,* D'Estaing's flagship. Few of those who see in Philadelphia the portrait of Gerard, the first of a long line of distinguished diplomats who have represented France in the United States, know that before he went home Congress requested that his portrait be hung in its halls, so that we might keep reminded of his services to our country. La Luzerne succeeded Gerard in the fall of 1779 and represented France with ability and courtesy for five critical years. With Gerard came Silas Deane, who, though he had made enemies, had served our country so faithfully in France that Franklin wrote the President of Congress:

> "Having lived intimately with him now fifteen months, the greatest part of the time in the same house, and been a constant witness of his public conduct, I can not omit giving this testimony, though unasked, in his behalf, that I esteem him a faithful, active and able minister, who, to my knowledge, has done in various ways great and important services to his country."

September 1, 1779, D'Estaing came a second time, arriving on the coast of Georgia with twenty-two ships of the line and eleven frigates. In October an allied force of about 6000, two-thirds of which were French, attacked Savannah with great gallantry. The city was invested and its fortifications were bombarded by the French fleet. October 9th an assault was made, the outworks were carried and the French and American flags placed on the ramparts, but the allies were finally repulsed with the loss of about 1000, among them the gallant Pulaski. D'Estaing was severely wounded twice. Fifteen French officers and 168 men were killed, 43 officers and 411 men wounded. Though D'Estaing had been prevented from doing all that he wished, he had done his best with the utmost bravery, and there was great harmony between the allies. D'Estaing said, "My duty before all else was to prove to the new allies of His Majesty that

we were ready to sacrifice everything in order to keep a promise that we had once made."

On his return to France he rendered great service to America by urging his government to increase its efforts in our behalf. Of D'Estaing Lafayette wrote:

> "He is a man whose genius and talents and great qualities of heart and mind I admire as much as I love his virtues, his patriotism and his amiability. He has suffered every possible reverse and he has not been able to accomplish what he hoped for; but he is, to my mind, a man made to be intrusted with the interests of a nation like ours."

Rochambeau was a representative soldier of France, that nation of great soldiers. One of the most experienced officers in the French Army, his name attracted distinguished men to serve under him. Like Washington, Rochambeau was personally brave to the point of rashness, grave, reticent, a strict disciplinarian, but beloved by his men. Like Washington, Rochambeau had been made a colonel at twenty-two. He had won successive promotions by his brilliant deeds on the field of battle. In 1780 he had seen thirty-eight years of service and had attained the rank of lieutenant-general. He was proud of saying that of the 15,000

soldiers who had fallen gloriously under his command he could not reproach himself for the death of any one. Before Rochambeau departed for America the French Government had advanced 8,000,000 francs for the expedition. May 2, 1780, Admiral de Ternay sailed with six ships of the line and five frigates, thirty-two transports and a hospital ship. In order to carry more men Rochambeau was even obliged to leave his beloved war-horses. He was able to take with him only 5500 soldiers. Those who were left behind were bitterly disappointed. Rochambeau commanded the élite of the French Army, composed of the ancient and distinguished regiments, Bourbonnais, Soissonnais, Saintonge and Royal Deux-Ponts. The Bourbonnais regiment was the seventh in age in the French infantry, having been organized in 1595. Two regiments came from places notable in the recent World War, the Soissonnais and the Royal Deux-Ponts, the latter having been recruited in Alsace. The Duc de Lauzun, an author and one of the most elegant men of France, commanded a Legion of Foreign Volunteers, consisting of 800 infantry and 400 cavalry, part of whom had to be left in France for lack of transports. The French officers were noted for military experience and nearly all were

noblemen. To enumerate them and to tell of their deeds and of their descent would be to rewrite the history of France. I can name merely a few. Next to Rochambeau in rank were the brothers Viomenil, both of whom were major-generals, as was also Chevalier de Chastellux, whose literary work afterward won him a place in the French Academy. Berthier's extraordinary ability in arranging and carrying out military details made him later Napoleon's chief-of-staff, and Napoleon created him Prince of Wagram; Dumas became a general under Napoleon; Montesquieu was the grandson of the author of "L'Esprit des Lois"; Count de Vauban was a grandson of the great military engineer, and Count de Segur wrote memoirs of the American Revolution and of Napoleon. The colonel of the Bourbonnais was the Marquis de Laval-Montmorency, and Rochambeau's son, the Vicomte de Rochambeau, was lieutenant-colonel.

Lafayette wrote Washington November 13, 1780:

> "The Marquis de Laval Montmorency, of one of the most illustrious families in France, is on his way to the camp. The Chevalier de Chastellux, a relation and friend of mine, major-general in the French Army, is also coming. I every day expect my brother-in-law

> and his friend, Count de Charlus, only son to the Marquis de Castries, who enjoys a great consideration in France and has won the battle of Closter Camp. The Duke of Lauzun has also written to me that he would come soon. These five gentlemen may by their eminence at home be considered as the first people in the French army."

The colonel of the Soissonnais was the Count de Saint-Maime, and Lafayette's brother-in-law, Vicomte de Noailles, was lieutenant-colonel. He distinguished himself by walking the entire distance from Newport to Yorktown, 756 miles. Comte de Custine commanded the Saintonge. The brothers Deux-Ponts commanded the Royal Deux-Ponts.

There is nothing in the history of our relations with France more impressive than the fact that Rochambeau's orders were that the French Army should be under the command of Washington, " to whom the honors of a marshal of France will be rendered." No one in Rochambeau's army had such a rank. It was also ordered that " in case of an equality of rank and of duration of service, the American officer will take command."

In spite of the British Navy, Admiral Ternay brought Rochambeau's force safely over, and they

reached Newport July 10th, after a voyage of seventy days. July 12th Rochambeau wrote Washington:

> "I am arrived full of submission and zeal and of veneration for yourself and for the talents you have shown in sustaining a war that will be forever memorable."

Rochambeau wrote the President of Congress:

> "We are your brothers and we shall act as such with you. We will fight your enemies by your side as if we were one and the same nation."

Questions of etiquette and precedence were easily settled by two such unselfish men as Washington and Rochambeau, and the only contest between the French and Americans was as to who should first storm the redoubts at Yorktown. Rochambeau states that during his entire stay in America there was not a blow nor a quarrel between any French and American soldier. The gay French officers submitted with perfect propriety to the simple life of the Americans. The companions of Lauzun are described as being tall, vivacious men with handsome faces and noble air. They were splendidly mounted and equipped. When Governor Trumbull at table, when twenty of them were seated, offered a long prayer, they

attended with courtesy, and all joined in with the amen.

In 1781, at Newport, the French celebrated Washington's birthday by a parade, a salute and by a general holiday. This is said to have been the first public recognition of the day. French soldiers rendered themselves agreeable not only because of the politeness which characterizes their nation, but also because of the genuine interest which they felt in the American cause. Trees with apples growing on them overhung tents which the French had occupied for three months. The perfectly equipped army of France was proud to be allied with the ragged forces of Washington. The uniforms of the French Army were the handsomest ever seen in America. The Deux-Ponts wore white; the Saintonge white faced with green; the Soissonnais white with rose facings and grenadier hats with white and rose plumes; the Bourbonnais black and red, and the artillery blue trimmed with red. The more ragged the American soldiers the warmer the sympathy of the French. Baron de Closen wrote:

> "These brave men were painful to see; almost naked, nothing but pantaloons and slight jacket of linen or cotton, the greater number without stockings; but—

could it be believed?—in the best good humor in the world and all hearty in form and face. I am altogether in admiration of these American troops. It is incredible that troops composed of men of all ages, even lads of fifteen, of black and white, all half naked, can march so well and stand fire with such firmness."

Abbe Robin thus describes the Americans:

"The American troops have as yet no regular uniform. The officers and artillery corps alone are uniformed. Several regiments have small white fringed casques, the effect of which is sightly enough; their wide, long, linen pantaloons neither incommode them nor interfere with the play of their limbs on the march, yet with a nourishment much less substantial than our own and a temperament much less vigorous, for this reason alone, perhaps, they support fatigue much better than our troops.

"These American garments, although easily soiled, are nevertheless kept extremely clean. Their neatness is particularly observable among the officers. To see them you would suppose that they had a large amount of baggage, but I was surprised to find in their tents, which accommodate three or four persons, not as much as forty pounds' weight. Hardly any have mattresses, a single covering stretched on the knotty bark of trees serving them for bed."

A French officer wrote:

"The Americans gain more in my esteem as they are more known. I have met with the greatest integrity,

civility and hospitality among them. Their militia have joined us. They are not clothed in any uniform and are in great want of shoes and even of the most common conveniences, which, if a European Army was deficient in, a general desertion would follow. But the American troops are furnished with good arms, possess an incredible store of patience and preserve the most perfect sobriety. There are no more hardy soldiers, and the last four years have given incontestable proof of their valour."

Washington wrote Lafayette:

"A decisive naval superiority is to be considered as a fundamental principle."

For lack of this naval superiority the French Army was forced to remain idle at Newport for eleven months. But though inactive, the French were far from useless, for Washington was ready to attack New York in case Clinton made a demonstration against Rochambeau at Newport, and the concentration of the British ships at Gardener's Bay, in order to watch the French Army and Navy at Newport, made it easy for the American privateers to take prizes, and gave freedom to American commerce. When it became certain that a powerful French fleet was about to coöperate with the land forces, the French Army removed from Newport and joined Washington near New

York, and the combined armies spent July and the first half of August a short distance north of the British lines. At Phillipsburg, twelve miles from Kingsbridge, July 6, 1781, Washington's orderly book states:

> "The commander-in-chief with pleasure embraces the earliest possible opportunity of expressing his thanks to his Excellency, the Count de Rochambeau, for the unremitting zeal with which he has prosecuted his march, in order to form the long-wished-for junction between the French and American forces, an event which must afford the highest degree of pleasure to every friend of his country, and from which the happiest consequences are to be expected."

In congratulating his army on the arrival of Rochambeau, Washington says in his orderly book:

> "The generosity of this succour, and the manner in which it is given, is a new tie between France and America. The lively concern which our allies manifest for our safety and independence, has a claim to the affection of every virtuous citizen. The general with confidence assures the army that the officers and men of the French forces come to our aid, animated with a zeal founded in sentiment for us, as well as in duty to their prince, and that they will do everything in their power to promote harmony and cultivate friendship. He is equally persuaded that on our part we shall vie with them in their good dispositions, to which we are excited by gratitude as well as by the common interest."

While reconnoitering around New York, Washington commanded the admiration of the French by his perfect horsemanship and his coolness under fire. When the tide rose at Throg's Neck, they were obliged to swim their horses, as Washington so frequently had to do in his younger days, but this was quite new to Rochambeau. The officers were in the saddle for forty-eight hours and Count de Dumas had a horse shot under him.

Ambassador Jusserand, to whose learned studies we are greatly indebted, calls attention to the fact that his predecessor, La Luzerne, was the first to recognize the necessity of immediate action in the Chesapeake. As early as April 20th, Luzerne had written:

> "It is in Chesapeake Bay that it seems urgent to convey all the naval forces of the king, with such land forces as the generals will consider appropriate."

August 14, 1781, Washington states in his diary that he received dispatches from Count de Barras, announcing the intended departure of the Count de Grasse from Cape Francois with between twenty-five and twenty-nine sails of the line and 3200 land troops on the 3d instant for Chesapeake Bay, and the anxiety of the latter to have everything in the most perfect readiness to commence

our operations in the moment of his arrival, as he should be under a necessity from particular engagements with the Spaniards to be in the West Indies by the middle of October. " Matters having now come to a crisis, I was obliged, from the shortness of Count de Grasse's promised stay on this coast, to give up all idea of attacking New York; and instead thereof to remove the French troops and a detachment from the American Army to the Head of Elk, to be transported to Virginia." August 16th Washington received word from Lafayette that Cornwallis had reached Yorktown on the 6th and was throwing up works. Washington took south 2000 Continentals and 4000 French. Washington and Rochambeau alone knew the destination. Every one else, the British included, thought that the allies would attack New York City by way of Staten Island. In order to enable the American Army to march to Yorktown, Robert Morris borrowed $30,000, $20,000 of which was loaned by Rochambeau from his military chest. Morris promised to return this by October 1st, and was enable to do so by the arrival from France of Colonel Laurens with a part of a donation of 6,000,000 francs given by the French Government.

August 19th the united armies commenced their march to the south. On passing through Philadelphia the French Army paid Congress the honors which had been ordered and the thirteen representatives of Congress took off their thirteen hats at each salute. At Chester, September 5th, Washington received information that De Grasse had arrived in the Chesapeake August 30th. This good news caused the commander-in-chief to give way to his feelings, as he had done at Valley Forge in celebrating the French alliance. Eye-witnesses relate that Washington stood on the bank of the Delaware waving his hat as Rochambeau approached. Lauzun said that he had never seen a man more carried away with joy, and Deux-Ponts wrote that Washington's face beamed with delight, and a child whose every wish had been gratified could not have expressed keener pleasure.

De Grasse was in command of twenty-eight ships of the line with six frigates, 1700 guns and 20,000 men. The British had to meet this force with nineteen ships of the line, 1400 guns and 13,000 men. Thanks to France, Washington now held the strings which controlled the destiny of America. De Grasse brought from San Domingo 3200 French troops under the Marquis de Saint

Simon. These were landed at once, and Saint Simon, although a field marshal, was glad to serve under Lafayette, who wrote:

> "The General and all the officers have cheerfully lived in the same way as our poorly provided American detachment."

A correspondent said of the French force:

> "You have seen the British troops and the troops of other nations, but you have not seen troops so universally well made, so robust or of such an appearance."

The regiments brought by Saint Simon were the Gatinais, Agenais and Touraine. Both Rochambeau and De Grasse exceeded their orders in their desire to aid our country. De Grasse brought every possible ship, so that the French fleet at Yorktown was the most powerful which up to that time had ever been fitted out by France. The flagship, the *Ville de Paris,* of three decks and 104 guns, was considered the finest afloat. De Grasse also brought 4,000,000 francs for Washington's Army. Five days after the arrival of De Grasse, nineteen British men-of-war, under Admiral Graves, appeared off the bay. They had been sent by Clinton to intercept De Barras, who had sailed from Newport August 28th with eight

ships of the line and fourteen transports, bringing Rochambeau's stores and siege guns. De Barras was the senior of De Grasse, but he waived his rank and risked his small fleet to make the voyage to the Chesapeake, and this is merely an example of the way in which the French in all departments of the service sacrificed their own individual interests to aid the American cause. Graves found De Grasse anchored within the capes, and the French admiral at once put to sea in order to decoy the British away from the bay so that the way might be clear for De Barras to slip in. An irregular fight followed, which lasted for five days, when De Grasse returned to the bay and found De Barras safely anchored within the capes. In this engagement the French lost 220 men killed and wounded, and the British 336, and one of their men-of-war, a seventy-four, had to be abandoned and burned. Graves, having failed utterly, returned to New York. The fleets of De Grasse and De Barras and the armies of Rochambeau and Washington had moved like clockwork; no storms marred their progress, no foe impeded their advance. The smoothness with which the forces of France and America worked together had not been equaled in the military his-

tory of the world, until we come to operations of the allies in France in the World War.

From September 9th to 11th Washington was at Mount Vernon for the first time since the war began. Here he entertained Rochambeau and other distinguished French officers. It is safe to say that these Frenchmen were the most welcome visitors who ever have been or who ever will be received at that shrine of humanity. September 18th Washington, Rochambeau, Knox and Du Portail visited De Grasse on his flagship. At their departure De Grasse manned the yards of the whole fleet and fired salutes. September 28th Washington and his staff slept in an open field two miles from Yorktown without any other shelter than the canopy of heaven. Washington states in his diary:

> "September 20th the enemy abandoned all their exterior works and the position they had taken without the town and retired within their interior works of defense in the course of last night, immediately upon which we possessed them and made those on our left (with a little alteration) very serviceable to us. We also began two inclosed works on the right of Pidgeon Hill, between that and the ravine above More's Hill."
>
> "October 6th, before morning the trenches were in such forwardness, as to cover the men from the

enemy's fire. The work was executed with so much secrecy and dispatch that the enemy were, I believe, totally ignorant of our labor till the light of the morning discovered it to them."

October 9th Washington himself fired the first gun. Not less than 100 pieces of heavy ordnance were in continual operation, and the whole peninsula trembled. The French had brass cannon of from four to forty-eight pounds in abundance. Then, as now, French artillery was considered the best in Europe, but a few days later when the British officers complimented the French upon the efficiency of the gunnery, the French said that equal praise was due to the American fire. Washington records:

"October 9th, about 3 o'clock P.M., the French opened a battery on our extreme left of four sixteen-pounders and six mortars and howitzers—and at 5 o'clock an American battery of six 18's and 24's, four mortars and two howitzers began to play from the extremity of our right. October 10, the French opened two batteries on the left of our front parallel—and the Americans two batteries between those last mentioned and the one on our extreme right. October 11—The French opened two other batteries on the left of the parallel."

On this day red-hot shots were fired, and the *Charon* and two transports were set on fire.

Washington wrote Congress, October 12th:

> "I can not but acknowledge the infinite obligations I am under to his excellency, the Count de Rochambeau, the Marquis de Saint Simon, commanding the troops from the West Indies, the other general officers, and, indeed, the officers of every denomination in the French Army, for the assistance which they afford me. The experience of many of those gentlemen in the business before us is of the utmost advantage in the present operation. The greatest harmony prevails between the two armies. They seem actuated by one spirit, that of supporting the honor of the allied armies."

The night of October 14th the bursting of six consecutive shells from the French batteries was the signal for an assault on the British works. Baron de Viomenil commanded the entire operation. The Americans under Lafayette stormed the left battery; the French grenadiers led by Viomenil, the right redoubt. Lieutenant-Colonel Gimat's battalion led the Americans, and Colonel Armand marched as a volunteer. Baron Viomenil, Marquis de Rostaing and Count de Deux-Ponts led the French, sword in hand. Colonel Deux-Ponts first mounted the ramparts and reached out his hand to assist a grenadier to follow, the man

fell dead and the Colonel coolly extended his hand to a second. The allies lost about 500 men. In one charge the French grenadiers lost one-third of the men engaged.

Rochambeau says:

"We must render to the Americans the justice to say that they comported themselves with a zeal, a courage and an emulation which never left them behind in any duty with which they were charged, although they were strangers to the operations of a siege."

Washington wrote the President of Congress:

"Nothing could equal this zeal of our allies but the emulating spirit of the American officers, whose ardor would not suffer their exertions to be exceeded."

Washington's diary says:

"October 16th, about 4 o'clock this afternoon the French opened two batteries of two 24's and four 16's each. Three pieces from the American grand battery were also opened, the others not being ready. October 17—The French opened another battery of four 24's and two 16's, and a mortar battery of ten mortars and two howitzers, the American grand battery consisting of twelve 24's and eighteen 16's, four mortars and two howitzers."

When early in the morning of the 17th the American grand battery opened fire with great rapidity, Knox, fearing that the ammunition would give out, sent word to Lieutenant-Colonel Stevens to

husband his resources, but he replied that there was no need to fear, as our friends, the French, would make up all deficiencies from their ample supply. To one who is familiar with the way in which Washington's operations were hampered throughout the war by lack of ammunition, this incident epitomizes our debt to France. A few hours more of the fire of the French and American batteries would have annihilated the British force. October 19th the entire British force, naval and military, "surrendered themselves prisoners of war to the combined forces of America and France." The French Army, drawn up in their brilliant uniforms extended for more than a mile. Opposite them were the Americans. The uniforms of those who had had them were worn and tattered, but over them flew the Star-Spangled Banner, which that day took its real place among the flags of the independent nations of the earth. Between the allied lines marched the British Army in new red coats, their colors cased and their band playing "The World's Turned Upside Down." The British general who represented Cornwallis offered his sword to Rochambeau, who said, "I pointed opposite to General Washington at the head of the American Army, and I said that the French Army,

being auxiliary upon that continent, it was to the American General he must look for his orders."

Nothing in the war was received with such joy by the American people as the victory at Yorktown. The news was followed throughout the country by triumphant bonfires, illuminations, parades, orations and sermons. In Philadelphia the Continental Congress went in a body to church to a thanksgiving service. The victory was complete and final. The independence of the United States, which had been declared at Philadelphia, July 4, 1776, was achieved at Yorktown, October 19, 1781. On that day a new nation was born and foreign domination was ended forever in the United States. There is no brighter page in the history of the world. Yorktown was the capstone of the edifice of which Concord and Lexington and Bunker Hill and Trenton, and Princeton and Monmouth were the foundations. England was quick to recognize that the war was over. The victory was almost as important in its results in the mother country as in America. The old fogies who had impeded progress were no longer tolerated, and forces were set at work and reforms were instituted which made England really self-governing. If it had not been for Yorktown we should have had a

Hanoverian kaiser as well as a Hohenzollern. The freedom of Australia and Canada, no less than that of the United States, was won by America and France united at Yorktown. On the day Cornwallis surrendered, Washington gave as the parole "Independence" and as the countersign "Rochambeau and De Grasse." In 1783, on the anniversary of the French alliance, Washington's orderly book shows that the parole for the day was "America and France" and the countersign "United Forever."

April 9, 1781, Washington wrote Colonel John Laurens, who had been sent over to obtain assistance from France:

> "If France delays a timely and powerful aid in the critical posture of our affairs, it will avail us nothing should she attempt it hereafter. We are at this hour suspended in the balance. Day does not follow night more certainly than it brings with it some additional proof of the impracticability of carrying on the war without the aids you were directed to solicit. As an honest and candid man, as a man whose all depends on the final and happy termination of the present contest, I assert this, while I give it decisively as my opinion that without a foreign loan our present force, which is but the remnant of an army, can not be kept together this campaign, much less will it be increased and in readiness for another."

Washington goes on to say that there is no money to pay teamsters to carry provisions to the army, the troops are nearly naked, the hospitals without medicines and the sick without food except such as well men eat. "We are at the end of our tether, and now or never our deliverance must come."

Although France herself was in need, Laurens obtained from the French Government a gift of 6,000,000 francs. He brought back a portion of this in hard cash and part he spent for arms, ammunition and clothing. Franklin wrote in a letter sent by Laurens:

> "This court continues firm and steady in its friendship and does everything it can for us. Can not we do a little more for ourselves?"

Everything we needed in that supreme hour France gave us. She supplied us with money when our own currency was utterly worthless; she supplied ships, arms, ammunition, troops and heroic leaders like Rochambeau and De Grasse, whose memory will always be dear to the American people. To save America France had to bankrupt herself. Professor Marion, of the College of France, thinks that participation in our revolution cost France 2,000,000,000 francs. Pickering, who

was Secretary of State in 1797, states that all the loans and supplies received from France during the war amounted to 53,000,000 francs. It should be kept in mind that the population of France was then but 22,000,000 and that the purchasing power of money was at least three times as great as now.

In the official list furnished by the French Government are the names of 47,000 officers and men, of sixty-two vessels and thirteen regiments, who landed on our shores or cruised in our waters during our Revolution. The greatest number ashore at one time was 8400. At Savannah the French lost 637 and at Yorktown 186. It is possible here to name but a few of the sons of France to whose efficient and unselfish services we owe so much. When skilled engineers were urgently needed Du Portail, Launoy, Radiere and Gouvion came to our aid; officers who were esteemed in the French Army and who combined practical ability with scientific training. They directed important works from 1777. Chevalier du Portail, who commanded the engineers at Yorktown, was made major-general for his services at the siege on Washington's special recommendation. The death of Radiere in 1779 deprived America of his valuable services. M. de Gouvion, commandant of artillery and

engineers, was distinguished at Yorktown and elsewhere. Launoy enjoyed the confidence and esteem of Washington. Fleury fought with such gallantry at Brandywine that Congress presented him with a horse in return for his own, which had been killed in battle, and he was conspicuous for his bravery at Germantown. At Fort Mifflin he was chief engineer during the six weeks of the siege. He was severely wounded and was promoted to lieutenant-colonel for his courage and skill. At Stony Point he was the first to mount the ramparts, and seized and carried off the British flag, for which he received a medal from Congress. For his services at Yorktown he received from France the cross of St. Louis and a pension.

Washington speaks of the " great zeal, activity, vigilance, intelligence and courage " of the Chevalier Armand, Marquis de la Rouerie. In 1783 he was made brigadier-general. Washington wrote the President of Congress January 13, 1778:

> " This will be delivered to you by the Chevalier Mauduit Duplessis, who was among the first French officers that joined the Army of the United States. The gallant conduct of this young gentleman at Brandywine and Germantown, and his distinguished services at Fort Mercer, where he united the offices of engineer and

commandant of artillery, entitled him to the particular notice of Congress. He made several judicious alterations in the works at Red Bank, showed great good conduct during the action in which the Hessians were repulsed, and was spoken of, in consequence, in terms of the highest applause by the commanding officer of the post. After the evacuation was determined upon he became the means of saving some valuable artillery and stores, and cheerfully undertook as volunteer, the hazardous operation of blowing up the magazines without the apparatus usually provided upon such occasions. I must further add in Monsieur Duplessis's favor that he possesses a degree of modesty not always found in men who have performed brilliant actions."

M. Tousard, a French officer attached to Lafayette, rushed boldly forward in attempt to capture a cannon on Rhode Island and was surrounded by British. His horse was killed under him, he lost his right arm, but he escaped capture. Congress made him brevet lieutenant-colonel and gave him a life pension. La Perouse, the daring navigator and explorer, who in 1788 was lost at sea with his entire expedition, carried young Rochambeau back to France, he passing through the British blockading fleet in a storm, which carried away his mast. When Baron St. Ovary, who aided Lafayette in rallying the Americans, was taken prisoner at

Brandywine, Congress called him " a gallant gentleman from France, engaged as a volunteer in the service of the United States, and lately, by the fortune of war, made prisoner by the British." Count Charles de Lameth was severely wounded at Yorktown. We are indebted to France for the valuable services of Steuben and De Kalb. The French Minister of War, St. Germain, induced his old friend and companion in the army, Baron Steuben, to come to America to train Washington's Army, and the French Government made itself responsible for Steuben's expenses. He was a brave man, of great ability, who had seen long service under the greatest masters of military affairs of the time, and had been on the staff of Frederick the Great. It was on a ship provided by Beaumarchais that Steuben came, and Beaumarchais advanced to him 6000 francs for his outfit. In the ship were military stores and several French officers, among them L'Enfant, who later planned the city of Washington and remodeled the city hall in New York for the use of Congress. L'Enfant was wounded while he was leading the advance in Lincoln's assault on Savannah. He was captured at the siege of Charleston. Baron De Kalb, who was mortally wounded at Cowpens, had seen more

than thirty years of military service before he came to America. His aide-de-camp, Chevalier Dubuysson, wrote that De Kalb withstood:

> "With the brave Marylanders alone the furious charge of the whole British Army; but superior bravery was obliged at length to yield to superior numbers, and the baron, having had his horse killed under him, fell into the hands of the enemy, pierced with eight wounds by bayonets and three musket balls. I stood by the baron during the action and shared his fate, being taken by his side, wounded in both arms and hands."

It will be necessary to devote a special section to the efficient and devoted services which Lafayette rendered to our country.

Rochambeau thus describes the meeting with the American forces when the first division of the French Army, returning from the south, arrived at Kings Ferry, September 15, 1782:

> "General Washington, wishing to testify his respect for France and his recognition of the benefits she had rendered, caused us to pass between two lines of troops, clad, equipped and armed with clothing and arms from France, and from the English magazines taken at Yorktown, which the French Army had relinquished to the Americans. He ordered the drums to beat a French march during the whole review, and the two armies rejoined with the most lively demonstrations of reciprocal satisfaction."

The French Army under Viomenil sailed for home from Boston December 24, 1782. Rochambeau, Chastellux and De Choisy sailed from Annapolis January 11, 1783. De Lauzun's troops sailed from the Delaware cape, May 12, 1783, with some others who had been left by Rochambeau to remove artillery and stores from Yorktown.

The letters which were exchanged between Washington and our French allies are creditable to both nations, for they are the words of high-minded men who had made common cause for humanity. They are more than mere expressions of courtesy, they are warm with real emotion. As Rochambeau was on the point of sailing for France Washington wrote him:

> "I can not permit you to depart from this country without repeating to you the high sense I entertain of the services you have rendered to America, by the constant attention which you have paid to the interest of it, by the exact order and discipline of the corps under your command, and by your readiness at all times to give facility to every measure which the force of the combined armies were competent to."

The Maryland Assembly sent Rochambeau an address which stated:

> "We view with regret the departure of troops which have so conducted, so endeared, and so distinguished

themselves, and we pray that the laurels they have gathered before Yorktown may never fade, and that victory to whatever quarter of the globe they direct their arms, may follow their standard."

On the first anniversary of Yorktown Washington gave a dinner to the French officers who were sailing three days later and were never to see him again. Closen says:

"There is no sort of kindness and tokens of good will we have not received from General Washington; the idea of parting from the French Army, probably forever, seemed to cause him real sorrow, having, as he had, received the most convincing proofs of the respect, the veneration, the esteem, and even the attachment which every individual in the army felt for him."

Luzerne wrote Washington:

"I can not deny myself the pleasure of informing you of the sentiments with which the reports of the French officers, on their return to Versailles, inspired the court and nation toward your excellency. Their testimony can add nothing to the universal opinion respecting the great services which you have rendered to your country, but, to the esteem and admiration of the French will henceforth be added a sentiment of affection and attachment which is a just return for the attentions our officers have received from you, and for the progress they have made in their profession by serving under your orders."

Washington wrote Baron Antoine Viomenil, who was second in command to Rochambeau, December 7, 1782:

> "The many great and amiable qualities which you possess have inspired me with the greatest sentiments of esteem for your character."

Baron Viomenil replied:

> "The veneration with which this army was penetrated from the first moment they had the honor of being presented to your excellency by Comte de Rochambeau, their confidence in your talents and the wisdom of your orders, the remembrance of your kindness and attention and the example you set them in every critical circumstance, the approbation, regret and wishes you have honored them with at their departure; these are considerations by which you may be assured there is not an individual officer in this army who is not sensibly touched as he is flattered by your approbation."

Antoine Viomenil was mortally wounded defending the royal family in the attack on the Tuilleries. His brother, Charles Joseph Viomenil, was afterward governor of Martinique and a marshal of France.

December 14, 1782, Washington wrote Chastellux:

> "A sense of your public services to this country and gratitude for your private friendship quite overcame

me at the moment of our separation. But I should do violence to my feelings and inclination were I to suffer you to leave this country without the warmest assurances of an affectionate regard for your person and character."

Washington wrote Lauzun May 10, 1783:

"Your particular services, sir, with the politeness, zeal and attention which I have ever experienced from you, have made a deep and lasting impression on my mind and will serve to endear you to my remembrance. It would have been a great satisfaction to have had another opportunity to give you in person the assurances of my regard could your orders have permitted your longer continuance in the country."

Rochambeau wrote of Washington:

"From the moment we began to correspond with one another I never ceased to enjoy the soundness of his judgment and the amenity of his style in a very long correspondence which is likely not to end before the death of one of us."

May 10, 1783, Washington wrote Rochambeau:

"To the generous help of your nation and to the bravery of her forces must be attributed, to a very large extent, that independence for which we have striven and which, after a severe contest of more than seven years, we have secured. The first wish of my heart is to pay the tribute of respect to a country to which, by public and private considerations, I feel myself attached by the most affectionate ties."

As I have been unable to obtain the original of this letter, I am retranslating it from the French. July 13, 1783, Rochambeau wrote Washington:

> "I see you at the glorious end of all your toils and with the desire to come to France. Try, my dear general, to effectuate this project. Let nothing oppose itself to the idea. Come and receive in a country which honors you and which has admired you the plaudits due to a great man. You may be assured of a reception without example. You will be received as you desire to be, after a revolution which has not its like in history. Everybody smiles already at the hopes you give me in your letter, and my heart beats with pleasure at the thought of embracing you once more.
>
> "It seems to me you should embark about the beginning of October, so as to be here about the beginning of November. You will then find the court returned from Fontainebleau. You will pass your winter in the midst of the gayeties of Paris and Versailles, and in the spring we will carry you to your country seats. Come, my dear general, and satisfy the desires of a nation whose hearts are already yours."

Washington wrote Rochambeau February 1, 1784, these words, which have been placed on the pedestal of the statue of Rochambeau in Washington:

> "We have been contemporaries and fellow-workers in the cause of liberty and we have lived together as brothers should do in harmonious friendship."

Washington wrote Rochambeau from Mount Vernon that he was engaged:

> "In rural employments and in contemplation of those friendships which the revolution enabled me to form with so many worthy characters of your nation, through whose assistance I can now sit down in my calm retreat."

In 1786 Washington wrote Rochambeau:

> "The sincerity, honor and bravery of your troops, the high-minded patriotism and the delicate sympathy which animate so many of your compatriots, with whom, I venture to say, I am intimately acquainted, and, above all, the keen interest which your illustrious monarch and his loyal subjects have taken in the success of the American cause and in the development of our independence, have made your nation very dear to me and have formed ties and left us impressions which neither time nor circumstances can destroy."

In 1789 Rochambeau was made governor of Alsace. He also became marshal of France and Napoleon gave him a pension and the grand cross of the Legion of Honor.

The key of the Bastille, now at Mount Vernon, was sent to Washington by Lafayette, who wrote:

> "It is a tribute which I owe as a son to my adopted father, as an aide-de-camp to my general, as a missionary of liberty to its patriarch."

The French Convention in 1792 conferred on Washington the title of citizen of France because he was "one of the benefactors of mankind." As a sacred emblem of liberty the American flag was displayed in the hall where the convention met. French officers presented Mrs. Washington with a dinner service, each piece with her initials in the center. On the news of Washington's death, the French republic went into mourning. Officers wore crêpe for ten days, flags were half masted and Bonaparte issued a proclamation in which he said:

> "Washington is dead. This great man fought tyranny. He established on a safe basis the liberty of his country. His memory will ever be dear to the French people, as well as to all the free men of the two worlds, and especially to French soldiers."

In the presence of Napoleon the celebrated orator Fontanes delivered at the Invalides a funeral eulogy, in which he said:

> "Washington's work is scarcely perfected and it is already surrounded by that veneration that is usually bestowed only on what has been consecrated by time. The American revolution, of which we are contemporaries, seems now consolidated forever. Washington began it by his energy and achieved it by his moderation. In rendering a public homage to Washington, France pays a debt to him by the two worlds."

The Frenchman Houdon has given us in his statue what is acknowledged to be the best likeness of Washington. It is to Houdon's everlasting credit that he insisted on braving the perils of the ocean in order that he might do his work from life in the most perfect manner. Houdon's statue of Washington is not the least of the debts we owe to France. I have studied most of the galleries of Europe and I doubt if there is another work of art in the world in which historic interest is so combined with artistic excellence. The descriptions of Washington, which have been left us by the soldier authors of France who knew and loved him, are numerous and appreciative.

We hear so much about the soldiers of France that her sailors are sometimes overlooked. Among them were great men who rendered inestimable services to our country. Where can we find in history another instance of an admiral like D'Estaing leading his forces in a land attack and being twice wounded? Those who served under De Grasse said:

> "Our admiral is six feet high on ordinary days and six feet six on battle days."

Paul Jones wrote Silas Deane of the exchange of salutes for the first time between "Freedom's

Flag and that of France," February 14, 1778, at Quiberon Bay, and he added:

> " The French squadron is officered by a well-bred set of men, all of whom have visited the Ranger and expressed great satisfaction, calling her *'un parfait Bijou';* when we visited their ships we were received with every mark of respect and gladness and saluted with a *'feu de joie'*."

The only time Washington had control of the sea was at Yorktown, and he put an end to the war there. If he had controlled the sea at Boston, he could have ended it five years sooner, but we had no French allies at Boston. France was acknowledged to be the most powerful country in the world on land, and in 1781 was able to dispute the control of the sea with Britain. Washington called the French fleet " the most numerous and powerful that ever appeared in these seas." The French Navy was charged not only with carrying on the war by sea with the greatest naval power in the world, but also with the transportation of troops and supplies. The services which France had to render in taking up our cause include not only the naval and military forces sent to our shores, but also the protection of her own ports and colonies

against powerful fleets and operations in Europe, Africa and Asia. On the other hand, when France came into the war, England had to protect her possessions, in the West Indies, Africa and India and on the Mediterranean. If it had not been for Warren Hastings she might have lost India.

It is among the proudest achievements of our nation that we have now proved that we are not unworthy of all that France has done for us. I do not know a man in the United States Army who would not have gone over to fight for France, if it had been in his power to get there. Perilous seas divided, but thanks to our efficient navy, a thousand leagues of water could not separate us, and American blood has mingled with French blood to liberate and to consecrate the soil of France. New glory has been added to Old Glory. The red, white and blue of the flags of America and of France have been united in battle and are now united in victory. As France came in our hour of supreme need and exerted the determining influence when our armies had been struggling for years in the American Revolution, so America has been privileged to provide in France the determining

influence in the World War. Lafayette wrote of the American Revolution:

> "Never had so noble a purpose offered itself to the judgment of men! This was the last struggle of liberty; its defeat then would have left it without a refuge and without hope."

These words also exactly describe the situation in France when America entered the World War. As Lafayette counted it the greatest honor of his distinguished life to have served under Washington, so Pershing has been proud to serve under Foch. "Lafayette, we're here," is with one exception the most practically eloquent speech that I know. It is comparable to the speech that Washington made in Virginia at the beginning of the Revolution. "I will raise a thousand men at my own expense and march at their head to the relief of Boston."

I have now told the wonderful story of what France, our ancient ally, did for us at a time when no one else would help us. Washington wrote Luzerne March 29, 1783:

> "The articles of the general treaty do not appear so favorable to France, in point of territorial acquisitions, as they do to other powers. But the magnanimous and disinterested scale of action, which that great nation has

exhibited to the world during this war, and at the conclusion of peace, will insure to the king and nation that reputation, which will be of more consequence to them than every other consideration."

Washington's farsighted vision has proved correct in this, as in so many other instances. Washington wrote D'Estaing:

"The welfare of the French nation can not but be dear to this country, and that its happiness may in the end be established on the most permanent and liberal foundation is the ardent wish of every true American."

As long as the children of America have a morsel of bread they should share it with the orphans of France. Our army and our navy have done their part nobly to repay our debt to France. What are the people of America going to do?

## II

# WHAT LAFAYETTE DID FOR AMERICA

By James Hosmer Penniman, Litt. D.

In justice to the memory of Lafayette it is necessary that a statement should be made of the priceless services which he rendered to our country in its time of utmost need, for that there is an astonishing misunderstanding of them is shown in an article in a prominent magazine which states:

> "He was never a great fighter, and his military career in America, though respectable, was not distinguished. It is hard to know what peculiar and signal service he rendered."

Lafayette voiced the spirit of France when he wrote:

> "The moment I heard of America I loved her; the moment I knew she was fighting for freedom, I burned with a desire of bleeding for her; and the moment I shall be able to serve her, at any time or in any part of the world, will be the happiest one of my life."

Lafayette became the living expression of the beautiful soul of France. He was honorable, chival-

rous and of noble birth; a warrior by heredity and training, his father had died gloriously at the age of twenty-five at the head of his regiment on the field of battle. Young Lafayette was lieutenant in a crack regiment and had been well drilled in the rudiments of his profession. His stubbornness—or shall we say pertinacity—made him stick to his purpose of coming to our aid in spite of all the obstacles which a government as yet neutral was forced to put in his way. The marquis was nearly six feet tall, with broad shoulders, high forehead and beautiful hazel eyes. He wrote:

> "In presenting my nineteen-year-old face to Mr. Deane I spoke more of my zeal than of my experience."

and he added:

> "It is precisely in time of danger that I wish to share whatever fortune may have in store for you."

The only reward which he asked for his services was to be enrolled as an American soldier under General Washington.

Lafayette had a yearly income of 200,000 francs, equal in purchasing power to at least $100,000 at the present time. He left his wife and child, bought a ship, and in order to buy the ship he had to buy its cargo. He brought with him to America

De Kalb and twelve other officers, one of whom was Colonel de Valfort, who later, as director of the military school at Brienne, became the chief instructor of Napoleon Bonaparte. On the voyage Lafayette wrote his wife that he thought his service under Washington would be,

> "A brevet of immortality. The happiness of America is intimately connected with the happiness of all mankind; she is destined to become the safe and venerable asylum of virtue, of honesty, of tolerance, of equality and of peaceful liberty."

It took them fifty-four days to make the voyage to South Carolina, and thirty-two more to journey on horse-back to Philadelphia, where, at a public dinner, early in August, 1777, Lafayette first met Washington. He writes:

> "Although he was surrounded by officers and citizens it was impossible to mistake for a moment his majestic figure and deportment; nor was he less distinguished by the noble affability of his manner."

The day after this dinner Washington invited Lafayette to go with him to inspect the forts on the Delaware.

Although less than twenty, Lafayette was commissioned major-general by Congress July 31, 1777.

The *Journal of Congress* thus records his appointment:

> "Whereas the Marquis of Lafayette, out of his great zeal to the cause of liberty, in which the United States are engaged, has left his family and connexions, and at his own expense, come over to offer his services to the United States, without pension or particular allowance, and is anxious to risk his life in our cause; Resolved, that his service be accepted, and that in consideration of his zeal, his illustrious family and connexions, he have the rank and commission of major general in the army of the United States."

Lafayette soon won the affection and respect of the American Army by his bravery and self-denial. He had to work hard; every one did who served under Washington; but, though brought up in luxury, no fatigue was too great for him to endure. He wrote:

> "I study, I read, I examine, I listen, I reflect, and upon the result of all this I make an effort to form an opinion, and to put into it as much common sense as I can. I am cautious not to talk much, lest I should say some foolish thing, and still more cautious in my actions, lest I should do some foolish thing, for I do not wish to disappoint the confidence that the Americans have so kindly placed in me."

Three weeks after he met Washington, Lafayette wrote his wife:

"This excellent man, whose talents and virtues I admired, and whom I have learned to revere as I know him better, has now become my intimate friend; his affectionate interest in me instantly won my heart. I am established in his house, and we live together like two attached brothers with mutual confidence and cordiality. This friendship renders me as happy as I can possibly be in this country."

Lafayette wrote his father-in-law:

"Our general is a man truly made for this revolution, which could not be successfully accomplished without him. I see him nearer than any other man in the world; and I see that he is worthy of the adoration of his country. His warm friendship and his entire confidence in me in regard to all military and political subjects, great and small, that occupy him, place me in a situation to judge of all that he has to perform, to reconcile and to overcome. I admire him more each day for the beauty of his character and of his mind."

Letters like this had great influence in France: Lafayette wrote Washington:

"The only favor I have asked of your commissioner in France has been, not to be under any orders but those of General Washington. I seem to have had an anticipation of our future friendship; and what I have done out of esteem and respect for your excellency's

name and reputation I should do now for mere love for General Washington himself. Anything, my dear general, you will order or even wish, shall always be infinitely agreeable to me, and I will always feel happy in doing anything which may please you, or forward the public good."

September 11, 1777, at the Battle of the Brandywine, when the Americans were making a disorderly retreat, Lafayette dismounted, and while bravely striving to re-form them, a bullet passed through his leg, but he carried on until the blood was flowing from his boot and he had to be removed from the field. He wrote to his wife:

"The honor to have mingled my blood with that of many other American soldiers on the heights of the Brandywine has been to me a source of pride and delight."

Of Washington's affectionate interest at this time Lafayette wrote:

"When he sent his surgeon-in-chief to me, he directed him to care for me as if I were his son, because he loved me as much; and, having heard that I wanted to join the army too soon again he wrote a letter full of tenderness, in which he admonished me to wait until I should be entirely well."

Lafayette went back to the army about October 20th before he was able to wear a boot. Count

Dumas, aide to General Rochambeau, records that more than three years later in January, 1781, when a number of French gentlemen were visiting West Point, General Washington perceived as they were about to mount their horses, that Lafayette, in consequence of his old wound received at the battle of the Brandywine, was very much fatigued, and on that account they returned to headquarters by boat. When Lafayette was ill, Washington rode the eight miles from headquarters to Fishkill every day for three weeks to ask after him, though the commander-in-chief was not allowed to see him till he was better.

Of an engagement near Gloucester, N. J., late in November, 1777, General Greene wrote Washington:

> "The marquis, with about 400 militia and the rifle corps, attacked the enemy's picket last evening, killed about twenty, wounded many more and took about twenty prisoners. The marquis is charmed with the spirited behavior of the militia and rifle corps; they drove the enemy about half a mile, and kept the ground until dark. The enemy's picket consisted of about 300, and were reinforced during the skirmish. The marquis is determined to be in the way of danger."

December 1, 1777, Lafayette was assigned to the command of a division. This was one of the

four divisions at Valley Forge, where he outwitted the enemy when they had his force nearly surrounded at Barren Hill. Of this engagement Washington wrote:

> "The marquis, by depending on the militia to patrol the roads to his left, had very nearly been caught in a snare—in fact, he was in it, but by his own dexterity or by the enemy's want of it, he disengaged himself in a very soldierly manner, and by an orderly and well-conducted retreat got out."

Lafayette wrote of Valley Forge:

> "The patient endurance of both soldiers and officers was a miracle which every moment serves to renew; but the sacred fire of liberty was not extinguished."

Washington's success was largely due to the fact that he was an accurate judge of men; his estimate of Lafayette is:

> "He possesses uncommon military talents—is of a quick and sound judgment, persevering and enterprising without rashness."

Washington also wrote:

> "He unites to all the military fire of youth an uncommon maturity of judgment."

When the enemies of Washington were dining at York while the General and his army were suffering at Valley Forge, Lafayette, who hap-

pened to be present, rose and reminded the party that there was one toast they had omitted, and then gave, "The Commander-in-chief." There is something superbly courageous in this French boy thus correcting those who were superior to him in age, but not in loyalty. Lafayette wrote Steuben with regard to Washington:

> "No enemies to that great man can be found, except among the enemies of his country; nor is it possible for a man of a loving spirit to refrain from loving the excellent qualities of his heart. I think I know him as well as any person, and such is the idea which I have formed of him. His honesty, his frankness, his sensibility, his virtue to the full extent in which this word can be understood, are above all praise. It is not for me to judge of his military talents; but according to my imperfect knowledge of these matters, his advice in council has always appeared the best, although his modesty prevents him sometimes from sustaining it, and his predictions have generally been fulfilled."

Washington loved Lafayette best of all men, and those who consider his nature cold should read his letters to the young Frenchman. He wrote Lafayette:

> "The sentiments of affection and attachment, which breathe so conspicuously in all your letters to me, are at once pleasing and honorable, and afford me abundant

cause to rejoice at the happiness of my acquaintance with you. Your love of liberty, the just sense you entertain of this valuable blessing, and your noble and disinterested exertions in the cause of it, added to the innate goodness of your heart, conspire to render you dear to me; and I think myself happy in being linked with you in bonds of the strictest friendship."

In 1779, Lafayette returned to France on a furlough, and in a letter to Franklin, who was representing America in France, Washington thus sums up Lafayette's services to our country up to that time:

"The generous motives which first induced him to cross the Atlantic; the tribute which he paid to gallantry at the Brandywine; his success in Jersey before he had recovered from his wounds, in an affair where he commanded militia against British grenadiers; the brilliant retreat, by which he eluded a combined maneuver of the whole British force in the last campaign; the services in the enterprise against Rhode Island, are such proofs of his zeal, military ardor and talents as have endeared him to America."

Washington does not mention here the efficient work of Lafayette in the pursuit of the British through New Jersey which culminated in the battle of Monmouth, where victory was snatched from our arms by the treason of Charles Lee.

When Lafayette first went to America he was obliged to sail secretly, because France was not yet at war with Great Britain. On his return to his native land, Lafayette was the hero of the hour and the recognized authority on American military affairs with the French Government. Duniol, who has written the most important work on the relations between France and America, says that Vergennes, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, had yielded, like Washington, to the charm of Lafayette, whose sagacity and clearness of vision, combined with his youth and enthusiasm, had made as great an impression at Versailles as they had with the Army of the United States and with Congress. The services which Lafayette rendered to our country on this visit are by far the most important of his life, for it was largely due to his persistence that France sent such powerful forces under Rochambeau and De Grasse that the war was brought to a victorious end at Yorktown, and it was at Lafayette's suggestion that the order was given that French forces should yield precedence to the American troops. I cite the following authorities to show the recognized importance of the work which Lafayette did for the United States at this time. Hon. Charlemagne Tower

states that Lafayette's incessant presentation of the American cause to the cabinet of King Louis XVI, and particularly to the Comte de Vergennes and the Comte de Maurepas, had an influence which contributed very greatly to the ultimate establishment of independence in the United States.

Edward Everett wrote:

> "Considerable discontent had arisen in connection with Count d'Estaing's movements in Rhode Island, which had it not been allayed by the prudent and effectual mediation of Lafayette would probably have prevented a French Army from being sent over to the United States. He pursued the object with an ardor, an industry and adroitness which nothing could surpass. When his correspondence with the French ministers, particularly the Count de Vergennes, shall be published it will appear that it was mainly the personal efforts and personal influence of Lafayette, idol of the French people as he had made himself, which caused the army of Rochambeau to be sent to America."

Sparks, who knew Lafayette personally, comments on Everett's statement:

> "This is an accurate view of facts. By repeated conferences with the ministers, by unwearied zeal and unceasing solicitation, he at length roused the attention of the French court, and accomplished his purpose; taking upon himself the entire responsibility in regard to

America, and to the manner in which the army would be received by the people. The event showed with how much discrimination he had studied their character."

As a small specimen of Lafayette's important work I submit the following extract from a letter which he wrote Vergennes May 20, 1780:

"Without being prejudiced, sir, by the affectionate friendship which attaches me to General Washington, I can answer for it that the French generals and troops will have nothing but praise for his uprightness, for his delicacy, for that frank and noble politeness which characterizes him; whilst at the same time they will admire his great qualities."

Such was the impression which Lafayette had made in France that La Touche-Treville, commander of the *Hermione,* on which his government sent the Marquis back to America, who is described by Rochambeau as a man distinguished by his zeal, valor, talents and nobility of character, when he received his instructions replied:

"I shall show to the Marquis de Lafayette all the respect and consideration which are prescribed not only by your orders to me, but by the dictates of my own heart toward a man whose acts have inspired me with the greatest desire to know him. I consider it a favor that an opportunity has been given me to prove the high esteem in which I hold him."

On his arrival in Boston April 28, 1780, Lafayette had a triumphant reception. Washington wrote to Luzerne, the minister of France to the United States:

"You will participate in the joy I feel at the arrival of the Marquis de Lafayette. No event could have given me greater pleasure on a personal account, and motives of public utility conspire to make it agreeable. He announces a fresh and striking instance of the friendship of your court, which cannot fail to contribute greatly to perpetuate the gratitude of this country."

Washington wrote Congress:

"During the time he has been in France he has uniformly manifested the same zeal in our affairs which animated his conduct while he was among us; and he has been on all occasions an essential friend to America."

Lafayette wrote the President of Congress:

"If from an early epoch in our noble contest I gloried in the name of an American soldier and heartily enjoyed the honors I have of serving the United States, my satisfaction is at this long-wished for moment entirely complete—when putting an end to my furlough, I have been able again to join my colors, under which I may hope for opportunities of indulging the ardent zeal, the unbounded gratitude, the warm, and, I might say, the patriotic love by which I am forever bound to America."

Lafayette had purchased in France with his own money a large quantity of clothing and arms, which he distributed to his men, so that his command was the best dressed in the American Army. When the allied generals met at Hartford, as Washington could not speak French and Rochambeau knew no English, Lafayette acted as interpreter. When Lafayette borrowed 2000 guineas from the merchants of Baltimore to clothe his men in 1781, Washington wrote him:

> "The measures you had taken to obtain, on your own credit, a supply of clothing and necessaries for the detachment must entitle you to all their gratitude and affection, and will, at the same time that it endears your name, if possible, still more to this country, be an everlasting monument of your ardent zeal and attachment to its cause and the establishment of its independence. For my own part, my dear marquis although I stood in need of no new proofs of your exertions and your sacrifices in the cause of America, I will confess to you that I shall not be able to express the pleasing sensations I have experienced at your unparalleled and repeated instances of generosity and zeal for the service on every occasion."

Lafayette's brilliant campaign in Virginia in 1781 resulted in the penning up of Cornwallis at Yorktown. Of the battle of Green Spring, during

these operations, Anthony Wayne, writing from near Jamestown, July 8, 1781, says:

> "Our field officers were generally dismounted by having their horses either killed or wounded under them. I will not condole with the marquis for the loss of two of his, as he was frequently requested to keep at a greater distance. His native bravery rendered him deaf to the admonition."

No man who served under Washington was braver than Anthony Wayne, and his opinion with regard to the courage of Lafayette must be considered that of an expert.

Let us see now what the historians think of the importance of this campaign and of the military skill with which Lafayette carried it on: Fiske remarks that throughout the game of strategy in Virginia Lafayette proved himself a worthy antagonist for the ablest of the British generals. Charlemagne Tower says that Lafayette:

> "Manoeuvred with such caution and such good judgment through Virginia, back and forth across its innumerable rivers and smaller streams, annoying the enemy, keeping out of their way, harassing their rear and yet preventing them from establishing themselves that Lord Cornwallis was forced to retire toward the coast in order to strengthen his army before undertaking what he called 'solid operations.' During a difficult

campaign Lafayette had made no serious mistakes. By his untiring energy and courage he had animated the Virginians to renewed efforts; he had protected their property, and, having kept his army intact, he barred the way by land by which Cornwallis might escape from his perilous situation."

Lafayette had forced Cornwallis into a neck of land surrounded by deep water. This afforded one of the greatest opportunities in the history of the world, and it was made possible by a Frenchman on land and a Frenchman on water. That Lafayette held the key to the military situation in America and the great confidence which was felt in him are shown by the instructions which Washington sent him on August 21st:

"As it will be of great importance toward the success of our present enterprise that the enemy on the arrival of the fleet should not have it in their power to effect their retreat, I can not omit to repeat to you my most earnest wish that the land and naval forces which you have with you may so combine their operations that the British Army may not be able to escape. The particular mode of doing this I shall not at this distance attempt to dictate. Your own knowledge of the country, from your long continuance in it and the various and extended movements which you have made, have given you great opportunities for observation, of which I am persuaded your mili-

tary genius and judgment will lead you to make the best improvement."

How efficiently Lafayette did this work is clear from the following extract from a letter which he wrote Washington September 1st:

"I hope you will find that we have taken the best precautions to lessen his lordship's chances to escape. He has a few left, but so very precarious that I hardly believe he will make the attempt. If he does, he must give up ships, artillery, baggage, part of the horses, all the negroes; he must be certain to lose the third of his army and run the greatest risk to lose the whole without gaining that glory which he may derive from a brilliant siege."

The fleet of De Grasse brought more than 3000 regulars with formidable artillery under the Marquis de Saint Simon, who, although a field marshal, was willing to serve under Lafayette, and that Lafayette was equally regardless of his own rank is shown by the following: From near Williamsburg, September 8th, Lafayette wrote Washington:

"The French troops, my dear general, have landed with amazing celerity; they have already been wanting flour, meat and salt, not so much, however, as to be one day without. I have been night and day with the quarter-master collector, and have drawn myself into a violent headache and fever, which will go off with three hours' sleep, the want of which has occasioned it."

De Grasse and Saint Simon were anxious to return as quickly as possible to the West Indies and demanded that Lafayette should attack Cornwallis at once, the admiral offering to send in addition to all his marines as many sailors as Lafayette might wish. This would have given a sufficient force to capture Cornwallis before the arrival of Washington. Mr. Tower says:

> "There is no doubt that the attachment of the Marquis de Lafayette to General Washington and his tenacity at this juncture preserved for the great American commander the glory of laying out and executing the plans of the Yorktown campaign. It is one of the finest examples of Lafayette's personal loyalty and unselfishness, of which he gave so many during his service in the revolutionary war. In the absence of instructions, and believing that the combined forces in Virginia were fully equal to the reduction of Lord Cornwallis, they wished to proceed. But Lafayette was the major general commanding, and he stood firm in his decision to await the arrival of his chief, his patron and his steadfast friend."

On the arrival of Washington, September 14th, Lafayette's independent command terminated, and he resumed his position as major-general commanding a division of continental light infantry,

and, as he had uniformly done, he exerted a powerful influence in maintaining the harmonious coöperation of the allied forces. If it had not been for Lafayette's personal efforts with De Grasse at this time it is not unlikely that the French admiral would have put to sea with his fleet and our independence might never have been established. Lafayette spent his twenty-fourth birthday at the siege of Yorktown. October 14th, Washington ordered the works of Cornwallis to be assaulted by two detachments of picked men, one of French under Viomenil and the other of Americans under Lafayette. Viomenil expressed doubts as to whether the Americans would be equal to the work, but they charged with the bayonet and without firing a shot captured their redoubt with many prisoners, including Major Campbell, while the forces of Viomenil were still struggling with the redoubt assigned to them. Lafayette had the satisfaction of sending a message to Viomenil asking if he required the assistance of his Americans. At the surrender of Cornwallis, Lafayette was at the side of Washington among his beloved Americans and not with his own illustrious fellow-countrymen. The first news of the signing of a general

treaty of peace at Paris on January 20, 1783, was brought to America by a French man-of-war, the *Triumph,* sent by Lafayette from D'Estaing's fleet at Cadiz. She reached Philadelphia March 23d, and brought the President of Congress the following letter from Lafayette:

> "Having been at some pains to engage a vessel to go to Philadelphia, I now find myself happily relieved by the kindness of Count D'Estaing. He is just now pleased to tell me that he will dispatch a French ship, and, by way of compliment on the occasion, he has made choice of the *Triumph,* so that I am not without hopes of giving Congress the first tidings of a general peace, and I am happy in the smallest opportunity of doing anything that may prove agreeable to America."

Washington wrote Lafayette April 5, 1783, that his letter of February 5th, from Cadiz, was the only news of peace yet received:

> "My mind upon the receipt of this news was instantly assailed by a thousand ideas, all of them contending for pre-eminence, but, believe me, my dear friend, none could supplant or ever will eradicate that gratitude which has arisen from a lively sense of the conduct of your nation and from my obligations to many of the illustrious characters of it, among whom I do not mean to flatter when I place you at the head."

In 1783 Lafayette went to Madrid and had an important interview with the King of Spain and his chief minister, and succeeded in procuring the recognition of the chargé d'affaires of the United States. In 1784 Lafayette spent nearly five months in America, and in 1824 and 1825 toured the United States for more than a year as the nation's guest. He spent the forty-third anniversary of the surrender at Yorktown; he laid the cornerstone of the Bunker Hill monument, and our government sent him home in a new frigate, appropriately called the *Brandywine*. At a dinner on his departure Lafayette gave as a toast, "Enfranchised Europe." He named his only son George Washington and one of his daughters Virginia. He was the last surviving general of our Revolution. When, in 1834, President Andrew Jackson learned of the death of Lafayette he ordered that "the same honors be rendered upon this occasion at the different military and naval stations as were observed upon the decease of Washington, the father of his country and his contemporary in arms."

Lafayette occupies a unique place in our history and in our hearts. No foreigner and but few of our own nation have been so dear to us. Presi-

dent Poincaré has written this inscription for the statue of Lafayette in Baltimore:

"In 1777 Lafayette, crossing the seas with French volunteers, came to bring brotherly help to the American people, who were fighting for their national liberty.

"In 1917 France was fighting, in her turn, to defend her life and the liberty of the world. America, who had never forgotten Lafayette, crossed the seas to help France, and the world was saved."

# FRANCE AND AMERICA TO-DAY

By Congressman A. Piatt Andrew
from Massachusetts

There has never been a time when such a volume as this was so needed as the present. The French and American peoples are separated by great distances from each other. They are often uninformed and more often misinformed about each other. With a few exceptions, they understand but little about their reciprocal points of view. The World War which brought them together in a supreme effort for a common cause is crowded from their memories by the business and diversions of current life. The tragic days of the American struggle for independence, when the forebears of both peoples suffered and fought side by side has become only a schoolbook story. Yet never has friendship gripped more deeply in the hearts of two nations than the friendship which has bound these two peoples in the most desperate and exalted moments of their history. It is well that we should keep fresh the memory of what was great and beautiful in those epic periods, and preserve it from the hand of the spoiler.

When the American Legion delegation, of which I was a member, was in France this autumn, we were all impressed by the friendly but bewildered feeling toward our country that we found among all sorts of people. So far as I can discover, not one of the delegation encountered open hostility or resentment, but the American attitude toward France since the war has obviously brought surprise and perplexity even though it has not altered friendship. For this there are a number of reasons which it is important that we should not forget.

First of all, we signed a separate peace which no soldier in the war, least of all the Americans, would have believed possible. The explanation of this is even more vaguely grasped in France than it is in America.

Secondly, it was an American President who proposed the plan of a Society of Nations, as it is called in France and throughout Europe, and it was he who induced the other nations to join, many of them rather reluctantly. Why we abandoned it after imposing it upon them, they find it impossible to understand.

Thirdly, our President and the other American representatives who helped frame the Peace

Treaty persuaded the delegates of France to abandon geographically dependable frontiers which they considered necessary for their security, on the signed pledge that the United States coöperating with Great Britain would guarantee the weaker frontiers for a period of fifteen years. This agreement, the so-called Tri-Partite Treaty, was subsequently repudiated by the United States, and was then rejected by Great Britain on the ground that we had not lived up to our part of the agreement.

Fourthly, our government has made no effort to help the French people secure repair for the unparalleled destruction of their towns and cities wrought by the armies of the world, including our own. We have appeared at least indifferent to their own efforts to secure such reparations. We have shown no such interest in their losses and sorrows as we ordinarily do in the case of great catastrophies. We have seemed oblivious of the miracle which they, unhelped and singlehanded, have accomplished in rebuilding ruins many times more extensive than any our own people have known in any period of our history.

Incidentally, it has been a source of surprise to some of us Americans that the United States alone among all the great nations of the world

has taken no part in the International Exposition which France, looking courageously toward the future, has organized this year in Paris. Even some of the ex-enemy countries have erected buildings and contributed to its success. One remembers how France in 1915, when desperately engaged in war, erected a building and sent important exhibits to our Panama-Pacific Exposition in California, and France will doubtless do as much for our Sesqui-centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1926.

Fifthly, among the sources of bewilderment is the pressing demand of our government to pay for the supplies we placed at their disposal after we entered the war while hostilities were going on. They had not borrowed a dollar from our government before that date, but from that moment, the line which held the enemy back became our line as well as theirs. President Wilson undoubtedly voiced the feeling of the nation on that memorable day in April, 1917, when he pledged to the common cause " our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are, and everything that we have." We could not give men at once, since we had only a paltry number who were trained and prepared, and nearly fourteen months elapsed before we were

able to make any substantial contribution of troops. But in the meantime we sent the material things which we had in abundance for our French comrades to use in their ordeal of carrying on the war. We sent iron, steel, copper, chemicals, shells, explosives, blankets, socks and many other supplies. And our government furnished the funds to pay for them. During those fourteen months before we had any substantial number of men in line, France lost nearly half a million of her sons holding back the common enemy with the aid of these materials. Is it strange if sometimes the French people wonder when we press them to pay for the only effective contribution we were able to make to the common cause during the greater part of the period of our participation?

The American Legion delegates visited this summer the long line of the old front, about five hundred miles in all. We saw the desolate waste where were towns that will never be rebuilt. We saw hundreds and hundreds of the one-room huts where the victims of war are still living eleven years after the wave of destruction began. We met many of the French soldiers whom we used to know and were shocked to hear of the meagre pittances which are all that the French Govern-

ment is able to pay to her million widows and orphans, and her millions of mutilated sons. It is but a small fraction of the compensation which our government is able to give to our own sufferers from the war.

Yet everywhere we met with friendliness, gratitude and affectionate hospitality. Over and over again in the towns and villages which we visited our offers to pay for services and favors rendered were refused by people we had never seen before and not infrequently we were invited to break bread with them. One instance among many that none of us will every forget happened in the little village of Bussy la Cote, not far from Bar le Duc. One of our Legion delegates, who had been a member of the 136th U. S. Artillery, recalled that just after the battle of St. Mihiel his regiment had been billeted in that village and that they had left their regimental flag in the village church. Making a detour, we drove up the hill to the village and were happy to discover the Stars and Stripes hanging on the altar. We had scarcely entered when the cobbled street was clattering with the wooden shoes of the peasants and children, who gathered excitedly around the church door chattering about "les Americains."

Among them, hurriedly removing her apron as she ran was an old lady, seventy-eight years old, as she afterwards told us, who plays the organ in the church. She trembled with emotion to see the Americans again after six long years, embraced most of us, and, with tears in her eyes, told us that every Sunday since the battle of St. Mihiel, she had played the Star-Spangled Banner at the mass. "It is our Sanctus," she said, "and we always play it just before the elevation of the Host," and she added, "To me your American national hymn is more beautiful than the sanctus of Beethoven."

The memory of Madame Grandpierre, of Bussy la Cote, will ever remain with us, as the symbol of the friendship which gripped deep in the hearts of the French and American peoples during the days of 1917 and 1918. It still continues, and God grant that no action of cold-blooded officials of either government shall ever disturb it.

GLOUCESTER, MASS.,
November, 1925.

# OUR PREARMISTICE LOANS

## SPEECH OF HON. A. PIATT ANDREW

Most of the discussion has proceeded on the assumption that our Government's foreign debts are all of them without distinction, like any other kind of debts, and that all of them bear the same moral as well as legal obligation. There are many, however, who question the validity of that assumption as applied to certain of the debts, and believe that just settlements with some of the countries and our own country's reputation for fair dealing are involved in the issue.

No one doubts that the debts of most of the debtor countries and some of the debts of all the debtor countries—those arising from loans made after the armistice for purposes of relief and reconstruction—are assimilable to ordinary debts and involve the same obligations. But we can not overlook the fact that a very large proportion of what were technically loans were essentially payments made by our Government for service rendered; and for these, no matter what may be their documentary form, the moral right

to demand reimbursement is, to say the least, doubtful. In order to appreciate this, we have only to recall the circumstances under which they were made.

As a good deal of time has elapsed since then, you will perhaps pardon my attempt to refresh your memories of those circumstances. I shall recount only the bare facts, and trust to your individual recollections of what happened nine years ago to supplement them.

Until the World War became our war the United States Treasury had lent nothing—not a cent—to Belgium, France, Italy, Great Britain, or any other country engaged in that war. It was during the first week of April, 1917, that the great decision was made by Congress on the advice of the President. In this Hall at that time he voiced the country's will in pledging to the task " our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are, and everything that we have." We could not send men to the front at once, for we had only a paltry number who were trained and prepared; and although we set to work with fabulous zeal to get vast numbers ready, it was evident that many months—at least a year and probably more

—would pass before we should have troops to take part in the war in which we were already launched. But if we had no trained soldiers, we had factories and mines capable of producing the supplies required by war; and within little more than a week after the declaration a bill had been voted by Congress to make these supplies available to the armies then in the field.

This act began with the words—

> For the purpose of more effectually providing for the (our) national security and defense, and prosecuting the (our) war—

And it authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to establish credits for governments—

> then engaged in war with the enemies of the United States.

The act was intended to make possible our immediate participation in what was now our war, and the credits were authorized in order to place at the disposal of the armies associated with us in the ordeal the iron, steel, copper, chemicals, shells, rifles, powder, explosives, and other supplies which we had or could produce in abundance and which they could use in holding or pushing back the enemy.

The character and purpose of this act are so crucial for the understanding of the whole question of what are called " the allied debts " that I ask your indulgence if I recall to your memory a few of the things said on the floor of this House and of the Senate when the bill was under discussion. I will cite only the words of influential Members, whose reputation and standing are known to you all, men from East, West, North, and South, irrespective of whether they were Republicans or Democrats. There were no sectional or party lines in those days when the country faced war. I think that you will be interested to hear some of the opinions expressed at that time, for they have a bearing upon the questions we face to-day.

Mr. MANN, of Illinois, stated the case very clearly on April 14, 1917:

> We are not prepared to place men in the field. We are not prepared to fight with our Army. We are not prepared to do very much with our Navy; not because we do not have some Navy but because there is little opportunity for the Navy to engage in actual war at this time. * * * The only way left to us is to help finance those nations who are fighting our enemy. * * * I think it is our highest duty in the making of war to give

aid to those who are fighting the enemy against whom we have declared war.

Then he added:

I only hope and pray that the aid thus given may be effectual enough to end the war before we send our boys to the trenches.

Let me quote next Mr. FORDNEY, of Michigan:

My idea is that those people are much in need of money to prosecute this war. There is no other object on the face of the earth in the minds of the American people in loaning European nations this money. Their only purpose is to aid them in the best way possible to fight our battle across the sea without calling upon our men to go there.

And now Mr. MONDELL, of Wyoming:

We can not say and we shall not say that we will not send our forces to any battle front where they may be needed to accomplish the purpose of the declaration of the Congress; but we sincerely hope that we shall not be called upon to do that to the extent of sending men to fight overseas. But we can effectively and in the immediate future arm and strengthen and support those who are, since our declaration of war, fighting our battles. They have already been heartened and strengthened by our declaration of participation in the conflict, and if we can hearten and strengthen them further by

large supplies of funds and strengthening of credit it is our duty and to our advantage to do so.

That is what three Republican leaders thought. Let us pass to the other side of the House. First, Mr. KITCHIN, of North Carolina, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee:

> You will understand that they will be fighting with our money their battles, and we will be fighting with our money our battles, too.

And he added, perhaps as an additional incentive—

> We are of the opinion that most of this money that we will loan to the Allies for the purchase of their bonds will of necessity have to be expended in the United States.

Mr. FITZGERALD, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, did not seem to be very much concerned about eventual payment. He said:

> I should gladly vote to give $6,000,000,000 to the nations arrayed on the same side with us if we could win this war without sacrificing American blood and American lives. I have little sympathy with the suggestion that possibly we will not get our money back. I care not so much if we do if American blood and American lives be preserved by the grant of the money.

Mr. RAINEY evidently did not consider the credits authorized by the bill as ordinary loans. He said:

> We are not making this loan for the purpose of making an investment of our funds. We are making this loan in order to further our interests primarily in this World War, and from that moment when the Congress of the United States declared that a state of war existed between this country and Germany every blow struck at Germany by any of her enemies was struck also in our interest.

Now, listen to Mr. LAGUARDIA, of New York, who, as he said, did not figure on the complete restitution of the $3,000,000,000 loan to be made to foreign governments:

> Yes; I believe that a good portion will be in due time returned, but I am certain that some of it will have to be placed on the profit-and-loss column of Uncle Sam's books. Let us understand that clearly now and not be deceived later. Even so, if this brings about a speedy termination of the European war and permanent peace to our own country, it is a good investment at that.

And last of all, so far as the House is concerned, I want to quote from another distinguished Member, who happily is also still with us and held in the highest honor, Mr. MADDEN, of Illinois:

We have already declared war, and we are not prepared to begin to fight the war we have declared. If we can find somebody else to fight the war for us with our money we ought not to hesitate to grant them the credit which they want and must have. There is no way to win this war except by men and money. We are not prepared to furnish the men to-day, and somebody else is prepared to furnish the men if we furnish the money. I do not agree with the statement that we are furnishing this money for somebody else to wage war on their own account, but we are doing our part to wage the war in which we are engaged.

And again, on the same day, Mr. MADDEN said:

If the men who have not the money and who are able to fight are willing to fight and offer their lives for the preservation of American honor and for the liberty of the world, then the men who are not able to fight but who have had the good fortune to make money ought to help to pay the bill. * * * Everyone knows that we will not have an army in the field for a year, or more than a year, and our duty to posterity and to liberty is to do everything we can to-day to win victory for the American people and for the liberty of the world.

Mr. MILLER, of Minnesota, asked:

Do I understand the gentleman to mean that these loans we are going to make are not to be repaid?

And Mr. MADDEN replied:

I would not care whether they were repaid or not. We are starting out to win a victory, as I understand it, to maintain American rights; and if we can maintain American rights by furnishing money to somebody willing to fight our battles until we are prepared to fight those battles for ourselves we ought to do it.

Mr. MOORE, of Pennsylvania, inquired:

The gentleman knows that if the foreign governments do not pay the money they borrow from us the people of the United States will have to pay it?

And again Mr. MADDEN replied:

I am one of the American people who is ready to pay my share of the obligation, and I shall have to pay as much of the money that is to be raised in taxes as most of the men in the United States will have to pay, and I am ready to do it to the extent of every dollar I own.

What was said in the Senate was very like what had been said in the House. I will quote only a few passages, and first of all from the then chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator SIMMONS, of North Carolina:

Mr. President, we have not the men to send over there at present to help fight our battles; our Navy possibly can be of but very little use in present conditions. It will be long, weary months of waiting before we shall be

able to render much assistance to our allies in the field. The help this bill offers is an earnest and a guaranty which carries hope and assurance of greater assistance and helpfulness in the future. It will assure them that in this great cause we stand ready to risk life and fortune. Let us do this heartily, cordially, unanimously, and without hesitation; let us do it in the spirit of men who thoroughly understand and comprehend the great cause in which we are fighting, the great thing that we are undertaking, and who are entering into it without thought of profits, without thought of financial loss, without thought of the bodily discomfort, without thought of the sacrifice, but ready and willing to make every sacrifice.

A little later Senator McCUMBER, of North Dakota, who subsequently became chairman of the Finance Committee, spoke as follows:

While we are recognizing that we are putting $7,000,000,000 into the battle, we must not fail to recognize that we are not as yet putting in a single one of our American soldiers, while blood is being poured out by our allies in unstinted measure. * * * It is probably true that more than a quarter of a million men are going down to death or are being wounded or captured every month during the contest. Therefore, while they are suffering to that extent, we ought to be mighty liberal in the expenditure of money when we can take no part in the real battle, which to-day is the battle of the American people.

Let me quote next from the present chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator SMOOT, of Utah:

> The $3,000,000,000 which we are proposing to raise by a bond issue for the purpose of advancing it to the Allies, I believe, Mr. President, will all be repaid; but if it should not be, or if not one penny of it is returned, I wish to say now that every penny of it will be expended for the defense of the principles in which we believe and which we entered the war to uphold. Mr. President, I think that every dollar that will be expended under the provisions of this bill, if it is expended honestly, will be for the benefit of the United States, whether spent by us or by the Allies.

The junior Senator from Iowa, Senator KENYON, also spoke on that day, and among other things that he said was this:

> I want to say this for myself, Mr. President, that I hope one of these loans, if we make it, will never be paid and that we will never ask that it be paid. We owe more to the Republic of France for what it has done for us than we can ever repay. * * * I never want to see this Government ask France to return the loan which we may make to her.

Finally, a word from the senior Senator from Iowa [Senator CUMMINS] and I think you will agree that he displayed not only insight but a

foresight that places him in the ranks of the prophets. He said:

> I am perfectly willing to give to any of the allied nations the money which they need to carry on our war, for it is now our war. I would give it to them just as freely as I would vote to equip an army or to maintain a navy of our own; but I shrink from the consequences that will, in all human probability, flow from the course which is suggested in this bill. * * * I should like to give to the allied nations $3,000,000,000, if they need the contribution, with never a thought of its repayment at any time or under any circumstances; I should like to give that or whatever sum may be thought needed as our donation of one phase of our own war, but I fear that in the years to come the fact that the United States has in its possession bonds of these great countries which, when they emerge from the war will all be bankrupt, will create an embarrassment from which the men of these times will find it difficult to escape. I think it will cost us more to take those bonds and to hold them against these governments than it would cost us to give the money, with a generous and patriotic spirit, to do something which for the time being, for the moment, we are unable to do with our own Army and our own Navy.

I leave it to you, was not Senator CUMMINS right both in his prognostications as to what would happen and his advice as to what should have been done?

If you have followed the quotations which I have read, you will have observed that throughout the discussion the credits to be established were not considered as ordinary loans, much less as investments. They were regarded by Congressmen and Senators alike as America's contribution to the prosecution of the war at a time when we were unable to participate in any other way. Among the leaders in both Houses, not only was doubt expressed as to whether these loans would ever be repaid, but indifference was declared both by Democratic and Republican leaders as to their eventual repayment, and these declarations of indifference were not very seriously challenged.

We had not entered the war for the sake of other countries. It was not because Belgium was invaded or because France was being crushed. It was not on behalf of England or Italy or any other country than our own United States. It was because American men, women, and children were being killed, American rights trampled upon, American property destroyed. It was because we had discovered the German Government inciting an invasion from Mexico, and promising that country a part of our territory

in case of victory. It was our war on our own behalf because of our own manifold and sufficient grievances.

Yet, we were unable, and for fourteen months were destined to be unable to take any active part in the prosecution of that war. By force of circumstances we were virtually placed in a situation like that voluntarily assumed by many men in the North during the Civil War who having been drafted for the Union Armies hired substitutes to take their places. Being unable for lack of proper preparation to fight our own battles we were obliged to hire substitutes, as Mr. MADDEN so clearly expressed it at the time, "to fight our battles until we were prepared to fight those battles ourselves."

All that we could do during the fourteen months of preparation was to help other armies with funds. And that we did. And the greater part of the loans whose settlement we are now discussing is the result. I need not remind you that the service to us ourselves of the credits we extended to our associates during those months was no less than the service to them. If at any time between April, 1917, and June, 1918, when our effective participation began those associates

had failed and had been forced to make a separate peace, or if they had chosen to make a separate peace, no one can estimate what our war would have cost in American lives and treasure. No one can calculate what their holding of the line saved to the United States in men and in money. But certainly the funds we offered freely to them then, and which we are reclaiming now, saved a vast number of precious lives for us.

As General PERSHING said in a speech in Denver, August 23, 1924:

> If it had not been that the Allies were able to hold the lines for fifteen months after we entered the war, held them with the support of the loans we had made, the war might have been lost. We scarcely realize what those loans meant to the Allies and to us.

And then he added:

> It seems to me that there is some middle ground where we should bear a certain part of the expense in maintaining the allied armies on the front while we were preparing, instead of calling all this money a loan and insisting upon its repayment.

These are considerations, my colleagues, for us to remember in discussing the return of advances made in 1917 and 1918 to our brothers in arms of Italy and Belgium, and to be remem-

bered also later on when we discuss the advances made to France during the same period. These advances were not regarded at the time as ordinary borrowings. They were virtually our only substantial contributions to the carrying on of our war during nearly three-quarters of the period of our participation. They were the means of saving for us vastly greater expenditure and of sparing hundreds of thousands of American lives. We can no more consider to-day those advances as mere business dealings between borrowers and lenders than did those who authorized them nine years ago. [Applause.]

In arranging terms for the settlement of such advances we should be short in memory and small in spirit if we did not bear these facts in mind—if we did not look behind the strict letter of the obligation. Congress, in fact, made provision for such considerations when it instructed the Debt Funding Commission to arrange settlements which they believed to be "just," and Congress will bear these facts in mind in approving or disapproving the terms of the several agreements submitted by the commission to-day.

And now in the few moments that remain

may I try to express an opinion upon those agreements in the light of what has gone before?

The settlements with Latvia, Esthonia, Czechoslovakia, and Rumania were exclusively for postwar loans, and the considerations to which I have tried to draw attention are not applicable to them. Their loans were not incurred for carrying on the war, but for local relief and stabilization after the war. The arrangements made for repayment by these four countries seem eminently fair.

The arrangement with Italy must also be considered generous and fair. During the war, Italy borrowed from the United States a little more than a billion dollars—$1,031,000,000—and after the war somewhat over six hundred millions—$617,000,000. The terms arranged with Italy provide for repayment between now and 1987 of successive amounts, which if discounted at 4¼ per cent. interest would have a present value of about $538,000,000, or, if discounted at interest of 3 per cent. would have a present value of $791,000,000. In effect, what we are really asking Italy to pay is a total roughly equivalent to her post-armistice borrowings. We are forgiving or cancelling an amount equal to the loans

extended to Italy for carrying on the war, and asking her only to repay the equivalent of the loans made afterwards for rehabilitation purposes. The Italian people rendered invaluable service to our common cause. They made tremendous sacrifices of men and money. They are hard pressed in consequence. We can well afford to share in this way the expense of the battles they fought while we were preparing. [Applause.]

I agree, however, with those who have expressed the idea that what is fair for Italy would seem at least equally fair for France. For without the slightest question, of all the countries associated with us in the war, France bore the brunt and the heaviest burden. Italy lost nearly 700,000 lives in the war, but France lost nearly 1,700,000. The pensions for war victims in the two countries respectively stand in about the same proportions. The war damage on Italian soil reached a total of about 20,000,000,000 lire, but the war damage in France, wrought by most of the armies of the world, including our own, amounted to over 100,000,000,000 francs, or fivefold that of Italy. The internal debt of Italy amounts to about 90,000,000,000 lire; that of

France to more than three times as much, or roughly 300,000,000,000 francs. The foreign debt of France is more than double that of Italy. If justice and equity demand leniency in the case of Italy, it would seem even more so in the case of France.

And what is fair for Italy would seem to be equally fair for Belgium, the most appealing of the nations that suffered in the war. In all the hue and cry about " war guilt " no one, not even the ex-Kaiser, has ever accused Belgium of responsibility for it. In everyone's opinion Belgium was the most innocent as well as the most complete of the war's victims. I must confess to no satisfaction in one feature of the settlement with Belgium, and that is this: Of the countries that loaned her money when her territory was under the Kaiser's heel and her Government was in exile, the United States has the distinction of being the only one to demand repayment of such loans. England loaned her more than $500,000,000 at that time and France loaned her more than $600,000,000, and they both are in greater need of payment than we are, yet they have not asked and never will ask Belgium to repay. The United States loaned Belgium less

than a third as much—171,000,000—and the United States, though the richest country on the earth, is the only one to ask Belgium for reimbursement. I can not feel proud of the distinction. The agreement of the Debt Funding Commission to eliminate all interest on these loans, which is a virtual cancellation of more than three-quarters of their capital value, seems a half-hearted acknowledgement of the equities in the case which is neither logical nor generous. I shall vote for the Belgian settlement with reluctance on that account.

One more word in conclusion. It is not certain that "capacity to pay" is the only factor to be taken into account in arranging these settlements. It is not clear that "just" settlements according to the intent of Congress can be made simply by applying that formula, by merely estimating how much these people can be made to pay, or how much they and their children and grandchildren may be able to pay between now and the year 1987 through toil and taxes and squeezing the last penny out of Germany. I am not sure that even in terms of avarice our people would win the greatest possible gain by rigid adherence to this principle. I suspect that they

will make more money in the long run by treating other peoples as prospective customers rather than as debtors, to be forced through bankruptcy. And I fully believe that if we should insist upon this formula of "capacity of pay" during the next sixty-two years we would not contribute as much as we might to the reëstablishment of good will among men and of peace among nations. By keeping up such pressure for several generations we would promote better relations neither between ourselves and our former allies nor between them and the ex-enemy countries. [Applause.]

# EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

# HON. A. PIATT ANDREW

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Saturday, January 16, 1926*

Mr. ANDREW. Mr. Speaker, under the permission granted me by my colleagues, I desire to insert in the RECORD the text of the resolution which I introduced last week asking that terms as favorable as those which we yesterday voted for the Kingdom of Italy be extended to the Republic of France.

In substance, as I explained on Wednesday, we have agreed to wipe off from the account with Italy a sum equal to that which the United States loaned to Italy for carrying on the war. We only ask Italy to repay in the next sixty-two years an amount equivalent to that which the Italian Government borrowed after the armistice.

In view of the fact that France lost nearly 1,700,000 of her youth in the war, while Italy lost

about 700,000, and that the devastation in France caused by the war was fivefold that in Italy, justice and equity would seem to demand at least equal forbearance toward France.

The following is the text of the resolution (H. J. Res. 101):

Joint resolution authorizing the extension to the Government of France of as favorable terms for the settlement of its obligations as have been or may be granted to any of the other governments associated with the United States in the World War in the settlement of similar obligations.

*Whereas* the acts of April 24 and September 24, 1917, authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to establish credits for governments "then engaged in war with the enemies of the United States" declared that these credits were "for the purpose of more effectually providing for the (our) national security and defense and prosecuting the (our) war, and these acts were adopted at a time when the United States, then engaged in war, had no trained troops with which to oppose the enemy, and the credits so authorized were intended to make available for the troops of other nations associated with us the iron, steel, copper, chemicals, shells, rifles, powder, explosives, and sundry other supplies which they could use in holding back the enemy, and which then existed or could be produced in the United States in abundance; and

*Whereas* a considerable part of what is to-day

charged against the Government of France is the cost (at war prices paid to American manufacturers) of such supplies used by French soldiers during a period of approximately fourteen months after our entrance in the war, when the United States was unable to contribute men in substantial numbers, and such supplies represent the principal contribution made by the United States to the prosecution of the war during the greater part of the nineteen months of our participation, in which time hundreds of thousands of the youth of France were mutilated and killed while our troops were being mobilized and trained; and

*Whereas* the Government of France confronts to-day a most serious financial situation—

(1) Because of debts amounting to more than 300,000,000,000 francs incurred in the prosecution of the war, to which have been added debts amounting to approximately 80,000,000,000 francs incurred in restoring the homes, schools, and churches, the stores, factories, and mines, the bridges, railroads, and farms of France destroyed by the armies of the world, including our own;

(2) Because of inability to recover from the ex-enemy governments but a small fraction of the reparation for such destruction promised by the terms of the armistice, which our Government not merely agreed to but formulated;

(3) Because nearly 200,000 of the 893,000 buildings destroyed in France have still to be rebuilt, and annual pensions have to be paid to widows, orphans, and dependent parents of 1,700,000 French soldiers who

died in the war and to more than a million mutilated and disabled French veterans (a heavy burden because of the numbers involved, even though the individual pension rarely reaches a fifth of the amount paid to our own war victims);

(4) Because the money of France, seven years after the war, is depreciated to less than a fifth of its former value, so that all that the French people had saved and invested in bonds or savings accounts before the war, and all that they loaned to their Government for carrying on the war has already lost more than four-fifths of its value;

(5) Because the French people in recent years have been taxed to fully 20 per cent. of their total income, or nearly double the heavy percentage prevailing in the United States, and their treasury has been unable to meet bonds, maturing this year amounting to many billion francs, without vast additional issues of paper money, which threaten the misfortunes of further depreciation, on all of which accounts the Government of France has greater financial difficulties to overcome than at any time since the end of the eighteenth century; and

*Whereas* in the period of America's most extreme need France gave generous aid to the United States not only (1) in loans, when no other country would extend her credit (on some of which interest was remitted), but also (2) in outright gifts of money, and above all (3) through an expeditionary land and sea force, which contributed indispensably to the victory at Yorktown

and our independence, which is estimated to have cost France over $700,000,000, and for which she asked no recompense whatever; and

*Whereas* the situation is to-day reversed, and while France is in extremities, the United States occupies, as President Coolidge has said, " a position unsurpassed in former human records," being far more prosperous than before the World War, with no ruins to repair, a currency that is unimpaired, half the world's gold in our vaults (the greater part of which has been drawn from other countries since the World War began), and being able to provide liberally for our own war victims, to reduce taxes, and at the same time pay off annually a billion dollars of the Government's debt:

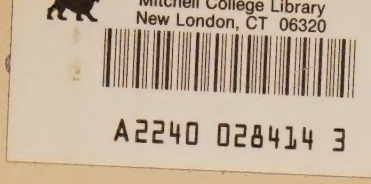
*Resolved, etc.;* That the World War Foreign Debt Commission is urged to take account of the circumstances and equities heretofore named and is authorized to extend to the Government of France as favorable terms for the settlement of its obligations as have been or may be extended to any of the other governments associated with the United States in the World War for the settlement of similar obligations.

DATE DUE

GAYLORD

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

Mitchell College
New London,




973.324
W-27
51244

The Washington Lafayette Institution

Our Debt to France